

**"THE LORELEI"—THE ANCIENT LEGEND IN A MODERN SETTING.**

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1910

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# THE SMART SET

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Vol. XXX

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No. 1

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# THE LORELEI

By WILLARD FRENCH

YOU remember that beautiful "Lorelei," which was so popular five and twenty years ago? Certainly, yes, if you remember back that far at all. In prints and lithographs it was everywhere—as perfect a nude figure as was ever drawn, seated on a ledge of rock, touching the strings of a harp.

You remember the German legend of the Lorelei, told in the song so often sung: "*Ich weiss nicht was soll es bedeuten*"—the legend of the bold bluff jutting into the Rhine, where the river makes a sharp curve in foam-flecked rapids just above San Goar?

You remember the legend, the rock and the song? Certainly, yes, if you were ever that far up the Rhine. But you never knew the rest: that the original of the sketch, in oil, life size, was never called the "Lorelei" by its creator—a canvas sold for the highest price ever paid for a single oil painting by a living artist.

Certainly, no. For even at the time when the prints appeared, there were but two in all the world who knew—knew one of the strangest stories ever told—and neither of them had any wish to divulge the identity or perpetuate the history of the painting. It was a series of tragedies and mysteries, from the birth of the artist to the obliteration of his wonderful masterpiece.

Indeed, only a miracle of incidents resulted in one of the two telling the tale—telling it to me. It was Dr. Dorner, the world-renowned linguist, then professor of languages in one of Germany's great universities.

I saw him first in the Dresden Art

Gallery, where I was wandering about drinking in the atmosphere of the masters, while correcting the proof of my first little book on art.

The whole world knew Dr. Dorner, and I knew him, but not by sight. We knew him best as the "Blind Professor," for, marvelous man of letters that he was, he had been totally blind for many years. The face which I saw in the gallery meant nothing to me beyond a face—but that was sufficient. It was the face of a tall, athletic, strikingly graceful man, who was seated beside a lady on a bench opposite a Titian in the main corridor. It was a face to thrill one with fantastic terrors, even while it filled him with mysterious calm. It was a mirror reflecting infernal scintillations, yet a face almost divine, speaking "*Pax vobiscum*" to every storm-tossed soul, and saying, "Peace, be still" to the troubled waters about it, with the voice of one having authority.

If, right now, I dwell for a moment on Dr. Dorner's personality, have patience. It is not irrelevant. It is absolutely necessary that you know him—who has been dead for many years. Not only does he enter into his own story, in evidence that he knew whereof he spoke, but the tale which he knew to be true you must believe because he believed it. Otherwise it is beyond credulity, and to listen to it would but waste your time. You *must* know him—so far as my imperfect pen can picture him.

The lady beside him was studying the Titian intently, and evidently talking about it. He was looking and leaning toward her, wholly absorbed

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in what she was saying. His eyes were large and dark, quite perfect, only lacking that piercing quality, so frequent in exceptionally large, dark eyes. They seemed to be dreaming, lost in brown study; but no one could have thought that they were blind. They were fringed with long, black lashes, topped with heavy, black brows, which were constantly in action, at once atoning for and emphasizing what the eyes seemed to lack. Close about them the face had a peculiar pallor, but it was largely the result of contrast, for, farther back, the temples, the cheeks, the throat had a warm olive tint. Possibly that, too, was partly the effect of contrast, for the thick, curling hair which covered his head was whiter than snow. There was a high, broad forehead, a straight, strong nose, with the sensitive lips of a woman over a firm chin of inherent self-reliance—but I have undertaken too much. The memory of that face is the memory of something beyond words; a symposium of the heights of heaven and the depths of hell—a renaissance of all that is best and worst in the world, the flesh and the devil in the face of one man. Coming events cast their shadows before; history leaves its imprint to follow. In that face were both.

My publisher came down the corridor, stopped for a chat with them, then spoke to me.

"Who is he?" I asked. He smiled in the paternal way a publisher has toward a raw recruit. Then he said:

"It is Dr. Dorner, with his wife. It will never do for you not to know him. Come; I will introduce you."

I vaguely remember that, while I was making futile efforts to say something, Mrs. Dorner walked down the corridor with my companion, leaving me alone on the bench with Dr. Dorner. He talked in a low voice that was rich in melody. His accent was peculiar, but not foreign. His pronunciation was perfect. His eyes rested quietly on me—and, good heavens, who could look and listen and remember that he was blind? In deference to me he talked of art, and in my random efforts

I injected a theory upon which I was fond of harping at that stage of my career: that art was languishing.

"No, no," he said quickly. "It is only that artists of today, tired of trying to better what has been, are seeking to accomplish what cannot be. Writers of today are making the same futile effort, but neither literature nor art can ever die. The color glory of the South is pervading the sturdy imagery of the North. The barbaric realism of the West is creeping into the voluptuous anatomy of the East, trying, through half-schools, to produce a composite perfection. It is impossible. Nature cannot be perfectly reproduced. In the weaknesses and failings of the great masters is the secret of their greatness. It would be a pity if perfection were possible. I appreciate your position, for our friend who introduced us has often spoken of you, and has read me parts of your book. But art is not really languishing. Genius only tunes her harp to more utilitarian melodies."

"But," said I, "do you think it impossible to outdo the old masters? I picked up a little print the other day, which has set my soul on fire with suggestions of unreachd possibilities. I have hunted in vain for the author or origin. It bears the title, 'The Lorelei.' If you have never seen it I should like to show it to you."

My breath caught in my throat. I had forgotten that he was blind. It was all the more bewildering when he said quietly: "I have seen it. Do you like it?"

"Like it!" I cried, forgetting myself in my enthusiasm. "I adore it! I worship it! The conception—the drawing—the delineation! Marvelous! Divine! I fancy it a creation so far beyond its creator that he did not appreciate what he had done, or he would have named it Eós—daughter of Hyperion, mother of the winds! Eós, Goddess of the Dawn! It haunts me. I dream of it as it ought to be. I see it in all the glory of color! I would give my life to be capable of putting it on a grand canvas, in all the fire



and passion of Italian tints. I would—"

"Stop! Stop!" said Dr. Dorner sharply, clutching my arm. From his pale face the depths of hell were scintillating.

Drawn by the subtle bond between them, his wife was instantly beside him. With a soft touch she brushed the white hair from his dark forehead. There was a moment of silence, most embarrassing for me, but when he spoke again the melody had returned to his voice.

"Sweetheart," he said, "our young friend has seen that print called 'The Lorelei.' He says that it haunts him; that he dreams of it in color; that he would give his life to reproduce it on a grand canvas, in the warm color tints of Italy, calling it Eós, Goddess of the Dawn. I feel tempted, dear, to tell him of another who offered up his life, and found but hell in the shadow of the Lorelei. Shall I do so, dearest?"

"If it seems best, love," she replied. Then she turned to me. "Come to us tomorrow. We lunch at noon. I have to spend the afternoon at the children's hospital; you can spend it with Dr. Dorner."

So, in a study that was worthy of the man himself, apparently sometimes almost forgetting that he was blind, he led me through the mysteries and tragedies of the coming and going of the Goddess of the Dawn. It was long ago that I listened, but I believe I can repeat the story almost in his very words; and only yesterday something happened, making me feel as he felt in the Dresden Gallery.

## II

THE story began at Boppard, a little village just below San Goar and the Lorelei, on the banks of the Rhine, under the grim battlements of the feudal stronghold, Steinberg. It was a wretched little place half a century or so ago—a few narrow streets leading nowhere, full of doubtful odors; an ivy-covered watch tower from the

forgotten past, and a moss-green spire rising above the only church—when there came, one day, a beautiful Italian girl, leading a bit of a boy. She could not speak a word of German, and not a soul in Boppard understood Italian. Shelter was grudgingly given her at the inn, for she was evidently ill. She died that night, and her body was buried in the potter's field, under the shadow of the green spire.

The boy was three or thereabout, and was finally disposed of to one of the needy old mothers of Boppard, who saved something each month out of the pittance allowed her from the treasury to feed and clothe and care for him. All that Boppard ever knew of the ragged waif who thus became a fixture there, with his great black eyes and black, curling hair, so different from their own ragged youngsters, was that his mother had called him Carlo. They never took the trouble even to give him more of a name. Little enough he received from them, and little enough he gave. His one and only ambition was to make pictures, or watch the village painter, who did everything from signs to fences, sweep his rude brushes over his crude creations.

Quickly enough Carlo learned to speak and think in German, and as easily forgot, for the time, at least, that he ever had a mother or that there was any other language. Half starved, half clad, utterly neglected, the exotic little dreamer would have found his row hard to hoe but for the way God has of tempering the wind to the shorn lamb. He was even saved the incoherent agonies of a hampered soul and an infinitely capable subconsciousness, crying out from such a dungeon for light and air, because there, in destitute little Boppard, there grew up with him, through the first years, just such another fettered soul; and like cures like, and misery loves company. She was one of those anomalies which are over and again discovered crying for light in dark Boppards. A little younger than Carlo in years, she was older in many ways,

and all German—"with hair of Saxon gold and eyes of heaven's blue." Little Mina did not wait to grow up to realize that abused term, the "angel of the village." Everyone always loved her and she loved them all. In that respect she and Carlo were very different. He simply feared them all and cringed before everyone—everyone but Mina. Before Carlo could understand or speak a word they were fast friends and playfellows, and every new day, as they grew up together, blessed the tie that bound them. But who in Boppard could have understood it? Surely not Carlo, nor Mina. He realized only that, though poorest of all the boys of the village, Mina, the best of all the girls, was his champion. Keenly enough he realized her value if, for a day or an hour, she was absent from him. Such times were no more frequent than need be, however, for, though Mina was more happily conditioned, there was no condition so happy for her as being with Carlo. Climbing about the ruins of Steinberg, they played themselves altogether out of poverty and Boppard into lord and lady, knight and sweetheart, in all the grand decorum which every child of the Fatherland knows so well from tales and legends of the stately days. They never doubted the integrity of that fondly fostered lore. They often fancied that the village in the valley was but an ugly dream. They never dreamed that the feudal transports of the Rhine were fancies.

When they were tired of pretending, Carlo would fetch a strip of slate from the ruin and sit making pictures for Mina. In one way or another she was usually a part of the picture, for nothing was right, as Carlo saw it, unless Mina was part of it. She alone of all Boppard understood and praised his work. Others called him a lazy brat, an indolent beggar, and boxed his ears and spat upon his pictures. They frightened him; Mina inspired him. While he tried, and tried for her, he would sometimes feel the throbbing longing of that inner consciousness struggling to reach out to infinite pos-

sibilities, and, angry with his bits of crayon, he would bite them, and cry:

"They will not do what I am thinking, Mina!"

Mina would laugh—she was always laughing—and say: "Don't bite them, Carlo. They'll behave better some day."

The more the little waif learned to love Mina and to appreciate her devotion, the more he dreaded lest he lose it; and up in the little attic closet, where he slept on straw upon the floor, he often lay awake at night, watching the stars through the one square window in the slanting roof above him, thinking of that all important love: why it was his and how he could manage to keep it.

Though he had so much less than other boys, the boys all envied him—all because Mina loved him. The only thing about him which was not better with them was the ability to make pictures. So, in his nightly research, there developed in his brain the overwhelming, fundamental conviction that it was because he could make pictures that Mina loved him. The problem of life grew plain to him: that for every joy he was indebted to Mina, and that Mina was his because he could make pictures. He was plotting out the problem before he could read and write, and never a more ardent devotee knelt at the altar of an unknown god; but whether he loved art for Mina or Mina for art or both for himself, was a question which never came to him for consideration until the whole grand fabric which he had built upon that first foundation had crumbled about him through its false construction. Mina, loving everyone—though not as she loved Carlo—and with everyone loving her—though not as Carlo loved her—had less occasion for anxiety and less need to probe the mysteries of love, or she might have thought about singing precisely as Carlo thought about picture making. She was always singing. It is true that everyone liked her songs and praised them, but she knew in her heart that none loved them like Carlo,



and she was very glad that no other girl in the village could sing as she sang. Over and again Carlo told her that he didn't believe the angels could sing so well. He meant it, too, for, with true Italian instincts in his soul, he felt, without knowing more, what others discovered later: that Mina's voice made melody of music, and that Mina's songs meant more than the words she sang.

The sweetest of all her songs, to him, was "The Lorelei":

*Ich weiss nicht was soll es bedeuten,  
Dass ich so traurig bin,*

but the grim sentiments had never once appealed to him. He had never thought of the words. He only loved the melody, and most of all a quaint, silvery trill at the end, which was all Mina's own idea. Time and time again he had listened, spellbound, to every note, never failing to clap his hands after the trill and look into Mina's eyes in a way which meant more than either of them understood, but which was very dear to her. And because, in her way, she loved him as much as he, in his way, loved her, she might easily have thought of music as he thought of art. In truth, she did in a less degree, and in later years of lonely, anxious longing she leaned more and more for strength and hope upon the faith of those dear baby days in music's charm to calm the troubled breast.

### III

ONE evening, as the sun was setting, a stranger who had been visiting the ruins paused to look over Carlo's shoulder. He stood with Mina by a low wall, on the surface of which he was drawing for her a last picture. He was nearly ten years old, and the intrusion of the stranger vexed him. He was on the point of brushing the picture out and running away, when the man said slowly: "Study a little, my boy, and you will do better." Then he walked on down the hill.

An angry flush flamed in the little

artist's dark cheeks. He caught up a handful of dust and threw it after the stranger. The man was too far away to know, but Mina grasped the hand, exclaiming:

"For shame, Carlo! Of course you will do better when you study."

The little fist was clenched when he dragged it away from Mina, and the fire had left his cheeks to flash in his eyes. But with another thought the fingers hung limp. The flames were drowned in tears. He turned quickly away and started toward the village. A blow had been dealt him which no words could possibly explain. Mina ran and caught up with him, and kept close beside him, trying to talk, but he would not speak to her.

Till then, when anyone, no matter who, made light of his pictures, Mina had boldly upbraided the scoffer and tried all the harder to praise and encourage the boy. Now, even a stranger—and they both hated strangers—had criticized his work, and Mina had turned against him. Could a blow have been more bitter to the friendless waif—whose only philosophy was that for every good in life he was indebted to Mina, and that Mina was his only because she thought his pictures perfect?

She gave up trying to talk, as they entered the village, and through the tears that choked her she began to sing "The Lorelei."

For the first time in his life Carlo really heard the words. Verse after verse, as Mina struggled bravely on, the picture grew before him, and every word of it seemed true—truer by far than the damp, rough pavement under his feet. He saw the beautiful, cruel enchantress singing on the ledge above the rapids, laughing down at the bewildered boatman, who could only look and listen, till his boat was dashed upon the rock and he was drowned. And in the picture, as it grew on him, Carlo seemed himself the boatman, Mina the Lorelei, and the stranger the rock in the rapids which had wrecked him. And the new and awful meaning which it gave to the last two lines

stung and stabbed his aching heart as he listened:

"And this is what, with her singing,  
The Lorelei has done."

He did not even hear the trill at the end—it was really more a quivering sob that night; neither did he applaud; but, turning sharply on Mina, he said:

"If you would study music, you could sing that better than you do."

"So I shall, some day," Mina replied; and, bursting into tears, the laughing little angel of Boppard ran down the street alone to her home, while the Italian waif turned into a narrow alley, where it was already dark, and climbed a long flight of stone stairs to the attic closet, broken-hearted, believing himself utterly deserted, and wishing in his anger that he had never made a picture for Mina in all his life.

On a stool by the door the old mother had left, as usual, a lump of black bread and a mug of water for his supper, but Carlo did not even look at them. He crept, shivering, under the ragged blanket over his straw pallet and lay staring at the sky through the little window over his head.

First thinking, then dreaming, it was all of horrible Loreleis grinning and calling to him that he could do better, and of rocks and rapids and nothing but ruin and misery left for him. He wished that he could die, and wondered what he could do to kill himself.

Later in the night something very remarkable happened. However impossible it may seem, and contrary to what we think we know of law—not to what we do *not* know of the outreach of subconsciousness—it really happened. Dreaming, or what, the little beggar of Boppard saw himself a man, seated in such an elaborate apartment as by no possibility could he ever have seen in reality, painting upon a grand canvas, not with the rude brushes and materials which he knew through the village dauber, but with delicate hair pencils, from a thin tray, covered with beautiful, pliable pigments. In the picture that was growing before him

there was a great rock; the tinted foam, from rushing water lower down, softened its base. Above the mists there sat a figure clothed in clouds of golden hair, touching the strings of a harp that rested on her knee. The face was Mina's—older than Mina, but the face of the beautiful woman Mina would some day be.

Starting from unconsciousness, he sat up and rubbed his eyes. Through the roof window the stars were shining. The clock in the moss-green spire was striking twelve. Frightened, he covered his eyes with his hands. Then, though wide awake, he saw it all again; and while he watched he distinctly heard a voice speaking. The words were not German, and he understood them no better than the vision; but both were so burned into his brain that they remained clear and distinct in his memory. He recognized them long afterward, when fate had written *Finale*. Only, looking back, he understood.

At the time he had but one conscious conviction. He felt that a power was compelling him to something; that some hand held his and he blindly obeyed. He crept from his closet, down the stone stairs and up the river, away from Boppard and Mina, before the stars were gone or the night mists had left the river. Only half conscious, he seemed to himself again the baby boy whose mother's hand held his and led him along that very road down the Rhine and into Boppard.

#### IV

SINCE his first coming he had never been so far from Boppard as San Goar, and the spires and towers and buildings of something so much larger than the little village frightened him as he approached. Cringing and only half conscious, Carlo crept away into a field and lay hidden, till near daylight. Then he roused himself, for the hand took his again and led him on through the town and out once more to the river beyond. All that he could



remember of San Goar afterward was the tugging of hunger to stop him where a heap of cakes appeared under a dim light in a bake-shop window.

Then, suddenly, the hand let go and he stopped just where the river curved in foaming rapids about a bluff on the farther side. Instantly he knew the ledge. He had seen it in his dream, seen it on the canvas. He knew it was the Lorelei. There was no boatman coming down the river, but that did not signify, for he was the boatman. The morning mists hung thick about the summit, but he knew that when they lifted Mina would be there, singing and laughing at his distress and calling down to him that he could do better.

He felt no inclination to turn back or to go farther. Weak from hunger, mentally dazed and helpless, he sank on the grass and lay staring up at the mists about the summit of the rock as the rising sun touched them with gorgeous colors and turned them into tangled rainbows. Then a breeze swept them away and there was nothing there but rock. His eyes told him so, but he knew better. He had seen the Lorelei.

It was not for that day alone, but for relentless years that the fatal dream was to him more real than any reality, resting, as the framework for the superstructure he was to build, on the firm foundation he had laid in solving the problem of life for himself, and the cardinal conclusions to which he had come in the night watches up in the little attic closet concerning Mina and her love. It followed him as the cross followed Cartaphelus, the Wandering Jew, while his soul lay cringing in the shadow of the Lorelei; nor was it lifted from out that shadow till in bitter travail the true conception was delivered and he realized what might have been, if he had only understood. The handwriting on the wall had to be spelled for him in facts; his kingdom had to be divided and taken from him, his boat dashed to pieces on the rocks, before he, standing beyond and looking back at an immutable

past, comprehended that the song of the Lorelei was meant as a warning to save and not to sacrifice.

Now he only laid another false block upon his false foundation. He felt that he had lost his Mina because she had discovered—the stranger had helped her to discover—that he could do better; and to this he fastened the conviction that to win her back he must overcome that criticism.

He did not realize the passing hours. It was late in the afternoon when he was partially roused by a hand touching his shoulder, and a peculiar voice, which he instantly recognized as that of the stranger of Boppard, said:

"What is lost with you, lad—your way or your wits? You were lying right here when I went past you this morning."

Carlo sprang to his feet and tottered toward the stranger. The man stepped back to avoid him, but Carlo caught the fingers of one hand and clung to them in mortal terror lest the man escape him. He was utterly unable to speak or think.

The large, gray eyes of the stranger softened a little, almost as though he tried to smile; but they were set in a face that was stern and sad, a face that had forgotten how to smile.

At last, without knowing why, Carlo whispered:

"I was waiting for you, sir."

"Waiting for me?" the stranger repeated. "Then there must be some exigency which I do not understand." And because the boy still clung and stared, hopelessly uncomprehending, the man added more gently: "Who are you, that you should have been waiting here all day for me?"

Carlo's lips were parched; his brain seemed dead. He whispered only:

"You know me, sir."

The stranger was watching him steadily and earnestly. He said slowly, speaking rather to himself:

"Your eyes are the windows of a soul that sees. There is intelligence behind them. They are uncommon eyes. Only once I knew eyes which were like them. But that was long

ago and far from here. I fancy you are mistaking me for someone else."

"It was you who told me I could do better if I studied, and Mina said you were right," Carlo managed to say.

"Is that so distinguishing a feature here upon the Rhine," the man replied, "that a boy should be instantly recognized by it? Where I grew there was many a boy who might have improved by study. But if I ever told you that, I must have met you somewhere. Tell me, where?"

"Where you looked at my picture on the wall," Carlo said faintly, almost ready to give up.

"Ah! Now we have gained a point." The stranger's eyes were again trying, all alone, to smile. "I remember a picture on the wall, on the way from Steinberg to Boppard. I did not see the little artist's face. How could I know that you and he were one? I remember the picture, though. Let me tell you. The background was a river. In the left foreground was a knight. Near the center was a tree. You were putting in a lady on the right when I stopped to look. It made you a little angry. It is a prerogative of genius to be easily provoked. Your work showed excellent instinctive qualities; and it was more in apology than advice—it was meant more as commendation than criticism—when I excused my rudeness with the comment that work already so good gave promise of emphatic reward as the result of a little study."

To Carlo's exhausted nerves and bewildered brain the slowly spoken words were meaningless and the strain was unbearable. Impatiently he interrupted:

"Of course I can do better if I study, and I came to tell you that I would."

Between the stranger's heavy brows two lines appeared and grew deeper. Again speaking more to himself, he said:

"To come all the way from Boppard to tell me that may have been only an instance of the ever phenomenal prodigality of genius; but—look me in the eye, lad—another thought has come

to me. Tell me truly, for I shall know it if you lie: who sent you after me?"

Carlo cringed under the imputation. In a louder voice he said:

"There was nobody but you, sir. You said it and I came."

"Then I owe you even more of an apology," the stranger added. "I did harm where I meant only friendliness. I would not willingly tempt anyone to become the slave of the treacherous mistress they call Art. Go back to Boppard, lad. Honor thy father and thy mother, as all boys should, and follow thy father's footsteps, as most boys do. There is no content in the life you seek. When, just for the pleasure of it, you stop sometimes to make a picture on the wall, simply give it a little more study—that is all I meant; only, have a care that the water is not too green, for a sharp background materially decreases the sense of distance; that the knight and the lady, through the central foreground, are not actually taller than the tree. Then if you let your horizon line dip a little below the apparent, rather than rise above it, it is more effective. It was simply because you did so very well already that I was tempted to suggest that a little more study of details would reward you generously."

"I have no father and mother," replied the boy. "And I will not go back to Boppard. How could I make the water right when I had only one green crayon? I rubbed dirt into it to make it look muddy, anyway. I couldn't make the tree big, because there wasn't any more of the rock there to make it on. If I had true colors and plenty of room, I'd show you right now that I could do better. That picture wasn't the best I've done."

With every word Carlo wondered how he dared to say it, how he knew enough to say it. Hardly ever in his life had he put so many words together.

The stranger sat deliberately down upon the grass, his large gray eyes fixed on Carlo.

"It strikes me, lad," he said, "that, in spite of my words of wisdom, you

still insist on fulminating fumes of genius." Then, taking pity on the hopelessly uncomprehending little Italian, he added gently: "Tell me more about your crayons."

A dirty hand, weak and trembling, drew from a pocket the precious treasures. "The painter gave them to me for helping him paint signs," he said. "I had no money to buy true colors and brushes, or I should have done better all the time."

"Of course," the stranger remarked, as if thinking aloud. "And it was quite right that you should come to me for these. I have an abundance, and how else could you follow my unsolicited advice? Possibly you had in mind only a thaler; but you deserve better of me than that, considering what your faith in my comment has cost you. Here is a louis d'or. Take it," he added, for the boy did not move. "It need not be charity. When you find yourself opulent you can repay me if you choose."

In all his life Carlo had never been nearer to a gold piece than outside the money changer's grated windows. He had never held even a silver thaler in his hand or ever possessed one little groschen all his own. Every nerve was quivering as he stared at the gold louis in the open palm. He felt that all the world would be his with what it could do for him. A grimy little hand crept trembling toward it. A steely glint in the stranger's gray eyes sent the hot blood to his cheeks. All of the anger he had felt by the wall rushed back to him. Mina was not there to stop him. Why he did it may be inexplicable, but he struck the hand with all his might and cried:

"It is true colors and a chance to study that I want! I don't want that!"

The coin fell to the ground. Very slowly the stranger picked it up, brushed off the dust and returned it to his pocket, while the boy stared in dumb longing; for every instinct in him said that he did want it, that he wanted it desperately. His vitality was too far spent and his brain too

dazed even for an effort to understand what the stranger was saying:

"How disrespectful genius always is toward gold! You have the earmarks distinctly, lad. Well, if it must be colors, true colors, as you call them, or nothing, why, sit down here beside me, and—"

Carlo was so faint and weak that he stumbled and would have fallen. The man was evidently unused to children, and for the first time realized that something was wrong. He put his arm gently about the boy and drew him closer, asking: "Are you ill, lad?"

Like the gold piece, kindness was something which had never been near to him before. It opened the flood-gates wide, and Carlo sobbed and cried as only a boy could who sadly knew the need but not the touch or sound of sympathy.

The stranger drew the head down upon his knee and gently stroked the tangled curls until the worst was over. Then his hands became busy with something making such strange sounds that Carlo's curiosity was roused, and he opened his eyes. Instantly all else was forgotten. From a case which hung over his shoulder the stranger had taken canvas and stretched it on a frame, then a palette and brushes and beautiful colors, such as he had seen in his dream. As Carlo sat up in wonder, the stranger opened an easel, setting the canvas on it, then a stool, which he placed before it.

"Come, lad," he said, "amuse yourself and interest me. Try again the picture on the wall."

Did he obey? He tried to. He meant to. But from the moment he touched a brush Carlo felt that unseen hand firmly holding his and doing what it would, while he watched the work in half-unconscious awe. He knew what he was doing, and what the picture would be when it was done, because he had seen it in his dream. His only conscious feeling was of disappointment that it was not to be what the stranger had asked for. He did not look across the river. He had forgotten that the rock was there. When the stranger

recognized what he was doing and asked, "Have you been here so often that you know the ledge by heart?" he was too busy to look up or think. He simply said:

"I have never been here till today."

When the stranger asked, "What is the figure you are putting on the summit?" still half unconscious, Carlo said:

"It is my Mina—I mean, it is the Lorelei."

The stranger said no more, but a moment later he was softly singing:

*"Ich weiss nicht was soll es bedeuten,  
Dass ich so traurig bin."*

And if Carlo had looked, he would have seen the steely gray eyes softened by tears. But he became entangled at the moment of victory, and threw the palette on the ground, exclaiming:

"There's no blue anywhere that is like my Mina's eyes!"

Silently the stranger took the canvas from the easel and examined it. Then he put it carefully in the compartment in his case, cleaned the brushes and packed them with the palette and easel and the stool, while Carlo stood by, watching and wondering. He had strapped and locked the case again before he said:

"True colors, lad, were the instinctive longing of your heart. You have done as you promised—showed me something infinitely better, already, than your picture on the wall. Now, you will not be angry, for you will understand me when I say that if you should ever study, you will do infinitely better yet."

"I will! I will!" Carlo cried, trembling.

"Well," the stranger replied, as he slung his traps again over his shoulder, "where there's a will there's a way, and where patience and persistence go with it, there is usually victory. But truly, my boy, being something of an artist myself in a small way, I speak from experience when I wish you a happier hunting ground than in this thorny field of flowers. Now, listen. I will come this way again next summer. I will look you up in Boppard.

If you still persist, I will put you in the way of getting on. In the meantime I owe you for this picture you have painted. It is really worth more than this to me, but here are two louis. Use them as you like, and later I will send you more. Now, don't make pictures when you can help it, lad, but be true to your instincts always, and they will be true to you."

Carlo could not move to take the gold or refuse it. The stranger dropped the pieces into the boy's pocket with the crayons and turned quickly toward the town. With straining eyes Carlo stood staring after him till the rock and the road and the river drifted in a mist about him and a golden-haired Lorelei floated above him. Then suddenly all turned black, and with a piercing cry he fell unconscious on the ground.

## V

THE stranger heard the cry and hurried back. He was bathing Carlo's face when the boy opened his eyes. "You are ill, my lad," he said anxiously, but Carlo shook his head and whispered: "I'm only hungry."

"Can you be hungry enough for this?" the stranger asked, gently lifting him to his feet. "When was the last time you had anything to eat?"

Carlo had to think a little, counting back, to say: "It was some time the day before yesterday, sir."

"My boy!" the stranger exclaimed. "You are genius personified! You have symptoms which may yet develop and make you the artist of the century. No wonder you are weak. Here, take my arm. Lean on me. We will walk slowly till we find something to carry us, or reach the inn. Don't try to think. I will just chat a little about art as we go, to make the way seem shorter if possible. And first of all, what you evidently need most to remember is the fact that pigments—true colors, you call them—are not half so essential to success in art as is a good breakfast and a good night's sleep. Many a Murillo has died a



scene painter in a theater for cheating Nature in order that he might save the means to copy her.

"See the shadows stretching over yonder field, and the beautiful tints upon the hills! Who knows the substance of a shadow? It is nothing. It is everything. It is the very soul of beauty. Without shadows lights would be insufferable. The glory of the blessed morning is that it comes after the night. See how the tints deepen as the shadows darken. It is the power and the glory of nature, all color, beautiful color. Some day you will be catching these glories upon canvas—preserving and interpreting to others the beautiful secrets which nature discloses to you. For many and many who have eyes see not; neither do they understand.

"But here we are at the inn. Now for supper and sleep. And after the night, then the morning—always remember that when it is dark."

Carlo was thoroughly himself again, only faint and weak. The strange possession seemed to have left him when he fell, and now the stranger had possessed him. The chamber to which he was taken after supper was only a neat bedroom in a clean German inn, but by his one criterion, his attic closet, Carlo thought it such a dream of fairyland that sleep there would be impossible. However, the innkeeper's wife had hardly bathed him and prepared him for bed when he was sound asleep, while the stranger, after turning the boy over to the motherly housewife, took a horse and rode rapidly to Boppard.

It was hours later when Carlo woke to realize that someone was holding a lighted taper over his head. He was frightened and did not dare to open his eyes; but his heart throbbed as someone touched his forehead, brushing back the curls, and kissed him. Then someone whispered, soft and low, words that were not German. The light faded, the door closed and he opened his eyes. He was quite alone—alone with the first kiss he could remember tingling on his forehead, and words, which seemed to lift a curtain

which had long been drawn, still ringing in his ears. He had never seriously wondered back before, back beyond Boppard; so, suddenly, the shadowy somethings which had often flitted through his mind began to seem real and intelligible. There had been snatches of meaningless words, sometimes linked in a run of notes, like Mina's songs. Now, to his great astonishment, he realized that they were truly words; and he said them over and over slowly to himself, those bits of Fiezoian cradle songs; and each time they brought back more of understanding of the words themselves and of other words and short sentences, and more of vague memory of the lost mother who sang them and said them. Here and there were little words which he recognized in the sentence he remembered, which the voice said to him that last night in his attic closet; and in the sentence which the someone who kissed him had just whispered. His heart beat fast as it broke like sunshine into his lonely soul that they were all Italian and that he was Italian.

It was a wonderful hour for the little waif, the opening—just a crack—of that forgotten door of memory, and as time went on it opened wider. More memories returned, and without much conscious effort or external aid the boy's mind turned again to his mother tongue. For that first night, however, there was only a very faint unfolding, but it was sufficient to thrill his heart with the first real joy of his life, and in the glow of it he again fell asleep.

It was a beautiful, bright morning when he woke. The housewife was moving about the room. She had brought him his breakfast and, besides, a wonderful array of clothes—the best that San Goar could furnish. It was all too much a dream for him to fully appreciate, and, besides, he had lived so much in dreams with Mina—dreams that were all of them more real than poverty and Boppard—that it was easier for him, not only then but through all that followed, to take whatever was as right and adjust himself

to it, as to the fairy tales, without much sense of gratitude or keen appreciation of unearned good fortune. However, when he saw himself in a mirror, clean and arrayed in what to him was princely magnificence, appreciation betrayed itself in an intense desire to fly again to Mina. Only second thought, born of the false philosophy which had grown up with him, instantly reminded him that it was with his pictures, not with him, that Mina was dissatisfied, that his pictures, not his clothes nor anything else of him, had won her and lost her and alone must win her back. Like a tidal wave the old theory returned, stronger than ever, engulfing him in the new life as it had in the old as his cardinal dogma and impulse, pervading and permeating every thought and ambition.

The stranger sat at a table in the inn garden, waiting for him for lunch. The housewife brought him down, and when they were alone together he said to him:

"You told me last night that your name was Carlo, and that you had no other name. My name is Charles, and where you will study art they call me Carlo. It will be confusing. Now, Anthony, for example—Anthony is a good name. In Italy they will call you Antonio; if Antonio will serve you as well as Carlo, why, you may have my last name to add to it. It is a heavy English name, but easily spoken. It is Winthrop. If you will make the change you will be Anthony—Antonio—Winthrop from now on."

The stranger paused, for he caught a shadow in the boy's face. The mother he had just begun to remember must have called him Carlo—and Mina called him Carlo. But second thought again flashed on his mind the memory that Mina was no longer Mina, that Carlo was the one she had wrecked in the rapids, under the shadow of the Lorelei. The troubled look fled from his face. The stranger continued:

"So, by right of the new name, you shall call me 'father' whenever it pleases you."

His hand lay extended on the table.

The boy caught it and pressed it to his lips, as he had seen Mina kiss her father's hand. Instantly he regretted it, for two lines appeared between his friend's brows, as he drew the hand quickly away, remarking:

"It is simply as it should be, my Anthony. It calls for no gratitude."

Then, soft and low, he added something to himself in those musical words. And Antonio knew who it was who kissed him in the night.

## VI

FROM the moment Antonio entered this new life, his new-found father became his instinctive criterion and mentor. There was no day that was sufficient to the joy of it. For months they traveled incessantly, and his eyes and brain were so busy absorbing the wonders of the world and the glory of it that he had no time to consider the new relation or appreciate his father's motive in overcoming, in one grand object lesson, the narrow limits set by his boyhood in Boppard. He only understood—it was so apparent—that his part was simply to absorb and to enjoy. He had never talked much, like other boys, even to Mina. He had never known anyone of whom he dared ask questions. To absorb silently was instinctive; and when each little word from him approaching gratitude brought instantly the narrow lines between his father's brows, the only thing he dreaded, he easily learned to avoid such sentiments and quickly forgot them. There was no other sense of fear, such as Antonio had always felt toward everyone. Only a mute, worshipful devotion grew in him for the strange, silent man. It was a desire to emulate, so far as it resembled any natural sentiment of one human being toward another, but better expressed in the reverence—not love—of the unlearned for the all wise, all kind, all powerful Master of their destinies, in whom they place irrefragable confidence, without in the least comprehending or caring why he

is what he is, or ever dreaming that what they are can be more to him than indifferent incident or passing accident.

Life to Antonio was but a continuance of the day dreams of Steinberg. It was a beautiful *märchen* which must be lived out as it lay, in spite of him, and could not by any possibility yield him more or better for any forethought or anxiety on his part. Only, through it all, there ran the imperishable thread of that first philosophy, and upon it he involuntarily hung each new development.

Whatever came was but a continuance. Now he was upon a great crusade, with one definite end always the goal of his ambition. He must paint a picture so perfect that his father and Mina could not say of it that he could possibly do better. The grand galleries of art through which his father guided him showed him the poverty of his little pictures on the wall, but never for an instant suggested a fear that he would not yet be able to surpass the best of them. He was as sure of it as of life itself, and equally sure that when it was accomplished he would return in pride and power to Boppard, to find his lady waiting at the castle gate to kneel at his feet for pardon for her cruelty. Nothing but art seemed for a moment essential, except such incidents, by the way, as his father might wish to incorporate—and only because he wished it.

Antonio had so easily become accustomed to taking everything as it came, and so firm in the faith that the best of everything must always subserve the man he worshiped, that when they reached at last their final destination, without any appreciable surprise he found a liveried footman waiting as the train drew into the station at Florence, and a coach to bear them "with the clatter of kings" through streets where many a glimpse brought back lost memories. It drew up at palatial apartments where, in a sumptuous *salon*, his father sank languidly into an armchair with a sigh, which alone to Antonio seemed inexplicable, saying:

"At last, my Anthony, we are at home. It is as much your home as mine, so I am hoping you will be pleased with it. There is an old Italian superstition that one's first wish in a new home is effective with the unseen powers possessing it. Tell me, what is your first wish on reaching home?"

Instantly Antonio replied: "I want to learn to paint a perfect picture." But quick as the words came, they were the work of second thought, putting in another way what had leaped to his lips to say: "I want to see Mina."

"The ruling passion is omnipresent," his father said. Then, after a pause, he added slowly: "My Anthony, you are very—well, peculiar. Eccentric is a miserable word, used by the infatuated to cover the foibles of the fools they cloak with genius. Heaven spare you the mark! It is not even genius just to happen to do one thing unusually well. But, my Anthony, you are peculiar. You are pregnant with possibilities. How they will eventuate only you can determine. But you have done so well thus far that I believe you will do better to remain as you have been, practically master of yourself. I shrink from the responsibility."

"You promised to be my master, and to teach me!" Antonio exclaimed.

"In art, my Anthony, yes," his father replied, "so long as I know more than you. And you shall have the best of tutors in every other branch you will investigate. But all that we can do for you will not produce a perfect man. That responsibility must be wholly yours, and I am afraid to interfere with the work you have so well begun. You ran after me up the Rhine because I told you that if you studied you could make a better picture. Now—"

"Because Mina said so, too," Antonio interrupted.

"Yes, yes," his father assented. "We must not forget the little girl with the blue eyes and the beautiful voice and heart and the glorious golden hair."

"She wasn't half so pretty that day by the wall as she was most days," Antonio interrupted again; his memory of Mina at the fatal moment had become sadly distorted.

"What day was that?" his father asked indifferently. He was lighting a cigarette.

"Why, the day you told me I could do better."

"Was Mina there that day? I was so taken by the picture that I did not even look at the artist. If I had realized that you were not alone I certainly should not have been so rude."

"Then you have seen her somewhere else? You know my Mina?" Antonio exclaimed.

"I know her through you, my Anthony," his father replied quietly. "Your study of the Lorelei, you told me, was a portrait of Mina. I saw the golden hair, and you told me there was no blue that could paint her eyes. Are not blue eyes and a true heart nature's rule? And could an artist's ideal Lorelei be one who did not sing? If you should drift into portraiture, as I have done, you will find that you must discover the heart before you can paint the face, and that in the instinctive work of other artists you will sometimes know the subjects better than by meeting them in a drawing-room. I have many things yet to learn of Mina, but I am sure of this: that, while you are perfecting yourself in art to please her, she will be perfecting herself to please you, so that when you return to her you will find her all that your changed life can demand. She will be the best that is in her to be worthy of you. And you, my Anthony—you must be the best that is in you to be worthy of her. I think that you have it in you to be the greatest artist of the day. Be as jealous of all your possibilities, and you will be worthy of Mina."

He who ran could have read, but Antonio's eyes were fastened on the ground. He clung to his first conception, through all the dangerous happiness of the next ten years, while he delved in the mysteries of books with

skillful preceptors, and in the mysteries of art, and the profounder mystery of life under his father's guidance, solving many perplexing problems, but never encroaching upon the conviction that in the power to make a perfect picture lay his inalienable title to Mina and her love.

## VII

THOSE first ten years in Florence were like the caress of the rising sun touching the tresses of departing night, fatefully suggestive of what the coming day might be. They were filled with possibilities, without an obligation or responsibility. His father became more and more the brilliant cresset of his aspirations. It was no surprise to Antonio to find that he stood among the first of living portrait painters. To him his father could have held no second place in anything. He knew that in the ten years he had not taken a step that was not planned for him, yet equally well he knew that from the least to the greatest incident he had been left in absolute independence.

His father was the brilliant center of Florentine society, and Antonio saw it all. They talked together in all the languages, while he studied them—his father was as familiar with one as with another. He guided his hand with the pencil, his eye with the color, his heart with the creation. No wonder Antonio made marvelous strides. No wonder, perhaps, that in the fever of living and the fervor of his ambition, he failed ever to look deeper into life, or deeper into the man he worshiped, than the superficial which absorbed and entranced him. So intense was his determination and energy, however, that at four-and-twenty all Europe had recognized his work and the ablest critics had begun comparing it favorably with his father's. But it neither surprised nor elated Antonio. He had believed his father from the first and considered that unprecedented success was his inevitable destiny. He relied upon the promise that with will and tenacity he would become the greatest



artist of the century. The critics were not his criterion. In that one ambition alone he showed the deliberate good sense which might have worked equal wonders in changing his view of life if an atom of it had passed beyond. He turned only to his father, who, always kindly but always correctly, showed him still that the knight was too large, the water too green, the horizon too high. Many a time Antonio felt like the boy by the wall, and could have thrown the dust of the street after his father as he went away, but it was because he knew that he was right and that with more study he could do better.

Mina's name had never again been mentioned between them, and Antonio believed his father had forgotten it; but to him, hidden in his heart, it was as real as in Boppard. Many a time he had almost yielded to the longing to write to her, but the years had flown for him, and the longing had always been met by the grim fact that still he had only to say to her that he must study and could do better—the same disparaging plane upon which they parted. It was as the victorious crusader returning that he longed to say: "Mina, I have come back to you."

Gradually, goaded by this ambition there developed in his mind the conception of a composition on a much grander scale than he had attempted—a life size figure in the nude, reclining on snowy clouds, half hidden in tinted mists. In his foredream he called it "Sunrise," and in forethought he knew that it was something upon which he could forever do his best and forever feel that he could do better. The very incongruity attracted him, for in accomplishing an impossibility lay the victory which was to set him free. With the determination of the boy upon the Rhine he cried, "I will! I will!" and with all the energy and courage which had forged him ahead through the years since then, he threw into the work with reckless prodigality every resource which life had granted him.

His model was an artist's dream.

He discovered her one morning out beyond the Roman Gate, where he was walking, plotting the picture. He came upon her suddenly, as though she were a part of his dream. With characteristic tenacity he grasped the conviction that she was what he required, and that, irrespective of incidents to overcome, she must be and would be the model. She had never posed. The idea was abhorrent to her when he suggested it, but failing to absorb whatever might lend its aid to the accomplishing of his ambition was as foreign to him as thought of abandoning the ambition. Over and again he waited for her outside the Roman Gate. He drew the picture of the help which she could be to him, in the brightest coloring. He walked with her, chatted with her, laughed with her, putting the compensation higher and higher and praising her beauty and grace till at last she consented. He knew she would consent, just as he knew that the stranger would be his master and teach him, when he clung to his hand on the Rhine. But just as his father had proved something more than a mechanical necessity, the new model involuntarily became more. She had both mental and physical advantage, for nature had worked one of its rare miracles in making her. Instead of the nonchalance of the professional model, once she had yielded, she gave every energy to dispose of both mental and physical perfections to the best advantage of the work upon which his soul centered. If his only effort was to paint just what he saw, Antonio felt that he could not better realize his dream of "Sunrise."

Painting lost the sense of drudgery which the quality of his ambition imparted. It was no longer a ceaseless effort to eradicate from the ideal the discordant features that were always conspicuous in the real. There was no tax upon imagination to fetch from the distorted dust before him the image of God which was in his heart. It was a constant challenge, instead, to reproduce the perfection before his eyes. Leonora became such an in-

spiration that three weeks had scarcely passed when the "Sunrise" lacked but the finishing touches of a last day.

At breakfast that morning Antonio's father was unusually absorbed. All that he understood of the man he worshiped was the superficial. Without sympathy or comprehension, his eagerness to emulate made him but an exaggerating mirror of the dust upon the diamond he ignored. He knew his father only by his weakest qualities, the marks of humanity in the man they could not mar. Because of the shadow on his father's face that morning, Antonio entered his studio later, sullen and dejected, in no mood for the final touches on his greatest work and determined not to attempt them that day.

Leonora was there. She was never late. She saw the frown, but before he could speak she repeated a merry bit of gossip about one of his artist friends. Under their low falling lashes her beautiful eyes were studying his face. She knew him better than he knew himself. She knew what he would say if he spoke. She did not want him to say it. He only frowned at the story, but, hardly waiting an instant, she continued:

"And I have something else that is very important to tell you, Signor Antonio. When you frown like that you frighten me till I cannot think. You will say that it is important, if you only listen. Why do you always frighten your models so, Signor Antonio? They cannot do their best for you. Only yesterday one of them met me as I was going from here. She guessed what I was and walked with me. She asked me many questions, but she did not learn a thing from me, while I learned a good deal from her. There is art even in answering questions. She said that once you advised her to take poison if she could not keep quiet any other way, and that another time you paid her extra because she fell asleep and did not worry you. If you will only stop frowning long enough for me to tell you something you will say is important, I will keep as still all

day as if I had taken poison. I will even go to sleep if you want me to, without extra pay."

Antonio still stood sullenly beside the easel at the opposite end of the room. He had not removed his hat or overcoat. But Leonora knew that she was accomplishing her end. She was sure of victory when she began, for while she talked she had been unfastening her clothing and hair as she stepped slowly backward toward the screen which formed a model's dressing room beside the dais and divan where they posed. Pausing beside the screen, she continued:

"It was yesterday, signor, just after you went out. Before I dressed I went over there, where I could see myself in the mirror and the painting at the same time. You have made me so much more beautiful than I am. The painting tells me what I ought to be, and I am trying to be like it. You did so much to it, yesterday, signor. It was a wonderful day's work. I forgot about the mirror and myself, and stood there for a long time trying to understand the beautiful painting. Suddenly I heard a key in the outer door. Only then I remembered that I was not dressed and ran and hid behind the screens. It was your father. He came and stood almost as long as I had before the painting. Even to the great Signor Carlo it is something wonderful. I could see it all in his face. I couldn't help it, signor. I am only a woman. I couldn't help it. I watched him through the crack in the screen.

"I know that the great Signor Carlo does not like my coming here. I knew that he thought he was alone. I did not dare to move. I only watched him. Finally he began turning his hand like this. See, Signor Antonio, this is the important part."

Vexed with himself that he should still stand there, patiently waiting for a model to cease speaking, Antonio sullenly raised his eyes. Leonora stood at the edge of the screen, extending one beautiful arm in the position of the pose. As he looked she turned her hand a little and continued:

"He said aloud: 'I believe that it would be better if it were turned a trifle, and bent as though parting the mists.' Then he went away and I went to the mirror and practised what he had suggested. Look, signor; I think that this is what he meant."

She threw herself upon the divan in the indicated position. Instantly the artist overwhelmed the man, and Antonio cried:

"Don't move! Don't move, Leonora! It is perfect!"

A faint smile let the teeth glisten between Leonora's lips as, in hat and overcoat, Antonio caught up palette and brushes and began to paint.

It was so slight a change that it was easily accomplished, something hardly perceptible in itself, but its effect upon the whole was marvelous. It vitalized the entire sentiment.

Antonio was lost to everything in the touches which were accomplishing so much. He was working on the hand. Leonora's face was free, and as the hand rested in an easy pose her mind was also free. The smile which had parted her lips crept to her cheeks, deepening the olive with a warm, crimson glow. It crept to her eyes—wonderful eyes, beautiful eyes—and lighted there a fire which burns only in Italy, as they rested on Antonio.

Suddenly, drawn by the subtle call, he glanced from the hand to the face. Their eyes met. For an instant his heart was still. Then it was throbbing. But the brush went stubbornly on. He was painting the hand, tracing the dream of a shadow where it touched the mists. He was trembling. He dared not look again. He bit his mustache in an effort to keep his thoughts on the canvas, but he could not drag them back from Leonora. He looked at the eyes of the "Sunrise." Had he there such eyes as he felt burning into him? Those parted lips—were they crimson with the breath of Elysian passion, as he had seen them when he looked? That raven mane, clinging in voluptuous clouds about the quivering shoulders, fondling the throbbing breast—had he

caught the reality? He ground his teeth over the cold counterfeit on the canvas. He had thought it a masterpiece, the reality of Leonora. The brush he was holding broke in his hand and fell in fragments on the floor. Ashamed, he cast a quick glance toward the divan. Then he forgot the brush. The fire had vanished; the smile was gone. The eyes were bright with tears. They were still fixed upon his face.

"Leonora!" he exclaimed. "What have I done to hurt you?"

"Nothing, Signor Antonio, nothing," she said quietly. "It was only a foolish moment. It is past. The eyes were finished yesterday. You were painting the hand, and I forgot myself. I am only a woman, and all women cry. It was only once in three weeks, Signor Antonio."

"I was thoughtless. I have tired you. Come, we will have no more today or tomorrow. The day after we will finish."

"No, no, signor," she said, "I am not tired. You must finish all that you require of me today; for I cannot come again."

Antonio was half across the room before he checked himself. He stood staring at her for a moment; then he said slowly: "You are always coming, Leonora. I shall never paint again without you."

"I promised you just for this picture, signor," she replied. "It is finished. I cannot ever come again."

One who has lived his life self-centered, as Anthony Winthrop had, is of necessity lacking in the sense we call intuition, the instinct of perception. Models proverbially had used that trick for increased pay. He remembered it and said: "Of course you will come. The bargain we made was for your pay for this painting. You shall have more hereafter."

Then he stood still. The artist overpowered the man in him again, and he knew that if he could paint that picture true to life—Leonora as he saw her—an angel of wrath, he could wear the laurel of art forever and forever.

Leonora's silk embroidered purse lay beside her on the divan. She caught it in her hand and flung it at his feet. He held his breath and waited for the words that would follow it, for of all the world Italian women have perfected the power of the pointed tongue, and Leonora was Italian. But he was mistaken. Suddenly every expression changed, and in her sweet, low voice, she said:

"Forgive me, Signor Antonio. I am only a woman, and women act first, then think. I brought the purse with me to return it to you today, for it contains all that you have paid me, and I never meant to keep it. Only, I wish I had returned it in a gentler way." A sigh lifted the folds of hair that fell across her quivering breast, and they parted. "It was not money which bought me, signor; neither can it buy me now."

"Which only means that I *have* offended you," Antonio said, grinding his heel against the floor, just as he used to kick the dust of Boppard when he was disturbed. "If I say I did not mean to, if I say that I am sorry, is not that enough?"

"I have nothing to forgive, signor. It is not you; it is simply that I cannot come again."

"Which means that it *is* something, and that you are so cruelly unforgiving that you will not even tell me what it is, giving me a chance to atone."

"Oh, signor, why should you force me to say it? It is simply that the great Signor Carlo does not like to have me here. That is sufficient."

"It is not sufficient!" Antonio cried, stamping the floor, for he, too, was Italian. "Has my father dared to be rude to you?"

Antonio's face was flushed. His eyes were flashing. He took a step nearer the divan. He forgot it was only his model—and to how many models he had, himself, been rude. But the hand that was parting the mists—that beautiful hand, with the slender, tempting fingers—turned just a little further, so that the palm was toward him. The effect in the real was

as potent as the other had been in the painting. He stood still.

"Your father has never spoken a word to me, signor," she said. "And if he had, he could not have been rude, even to a model."

"Then you are misjudging him," Antonio said. "I will ask him, right here before you today, and you shall hear what he says."

"Don't do that, Signor Antonio," Leonora replied. "It would only hurt him. He would not be rude; but he would tell you I was right. He does not want to tell you."

"You think it because he frowns. But it is not at you; it is at me, because my work is not right. You are mistaken," Antonio insisted.

"I am only a woman, signor; I have no sophistry," Leonora said, almost sobbing. "But I know. I will tell you, if I must. Then you will understand. While he stood before the painting and I watched— Oh, his face is so handsome and so wonderful, signor, that I could watch and watch. It is like yours, signor; every line is like yours, only that his is so softened and deepened and mysterious; it is so full of the strength of suffering. Only your eyes are different. Yours are Italian shadows, while his are the glow of the hidden sun on northern ice; full of subtle gleamings wrought by something not so near that we can see and know the cause, by electric currents sweeping over him from something past and far away. I cannot look away from them, signor, while he is here, unless I look back into yours to rest. He was frowning yesterday, all alone. That was not at you."

"It was at my work, because it was imperfect."

"Yes, signor. It was at your work, because it was imperfect. But it was not your work in the painting. I think that he only frowns, signor, when his heart is troubled, when some electric current from far away sweeps over him."

"He was simply angry over my stupidity."

"I wonder, Signor Antonio, how the



great Signor Carlo's face would look if he were angry? I am only sure of this—he would not frown. I never saw his face so sad as it was yesterday; and his voice was so soft and low as he said: 'Poor boy. I am sorry. He is painting her with more than the brush, on something deeper than the canvas. When he discovers it a heart will break.'" Tears filled Leonora's eyes. Her voice choked as she cried: "Oh, Signor Antonio! You know that I came here against my will. I have only tried my best to be a good model; but what does it signify? I would die rather than come here again—Signor! It is his step! He is coming! For his sake, be painting!"

And he was. The man who had not a thought nor act which he would not gladly have laid open to his father, in utter confusion fled to the easel, obeying a model, when he heard his father's footsteps in the outer room.

Signor Carlo opened the door, but did not cross the threshold. How much he saw only he knew. He did not appear to see anything. He simply said:

"I am in luck, my Anthony, to find your hat and coat already on—unless it is to keep some important engagement. Professor Scarlatti tells me that your nerves show too much work and too little recreation. I have the horses at the door. Will you come and drive with me for an hour before lunch?"

"Scarlatti is a fool, father, to think that I need an excuse to drive with you," Antonio replied, laying down his palette and brushes, which Leonora always cleaned when she put the studio in order before going home.

As he was going out, without daring to look back, Antonio said to her: "We will go on with the work in the morning."

## VIII

ANTONIO was bewildered as he sat in the carriage, while his father guided the fiery pair through the narrow, ill-paved streets and out upon the beau-

tiful broad drive along the Arno. The shaft of light which Leonora had shot across his father dazzled him, revealing so much which his selfish bigotry had hidden from him all those years. Along the lighted way his thoughts rushed back, even to the beginning. It changed the man who stopped beside him at the wall, who turned back to him upon the Rhine, who kissed him in the night. It did not signify to either that neither spoke. They were often for hours together without much conversation. Only when they were well out in that matchless valley of flowers from which Florence derives its name, the older man said carelessly:

"I see you have turned the hand a little, in the 'Sunrise,' my Anthony; it is pleasantly suggestive of the lavish generosity of light."

It called Antonio back in confusion, not so much on account of the distance his thoughts were wandering as from the fact that his father could have seen the canvas at all from where he stopped in the door, much less in that moment have realized the change. Yesterday he would only have added another laurel to the brow of his ideal man, and wondered if he could ever accomplish such marvels of acute perception. Today it meant more to him, and tears crowded to his eyes, dimming the serpentine reaches of the Arno. It told him, instead, of the intensity of the unmerited interest his father felt as an exponent of his unappreciative love. He could not speak to answer, and presently his father continued, in his peculiar way of thinking thoughts aloud:

"It would be novel. It would startle the art world. Companion pieces—'Night' and 'Morning.' The one on the easel, with but slight changes in the color tints and a shadow of sadness in the face, would make an ideal 'Night.' There is almost too much of tragic beauty in it for the beatific calm of sunrise. The little sketch of Mina you made for me on the Rhine—I was looking at it this morning—is vitally suggestive of the light and the truth and the beauty of morning; touching

the harp to scatter the mists, as the sunrise breeze scatters them, rousing the cold, gray ledges of life to the warmth and the joy of a new day. It would enhance the beauty, the celebrity and the value of both to have companion pieces. Call that the 'Morning' and call this the 'Night.' It may be a thought worth considering."

So utterly transformed had Antonio's conceptions of his father become, that instantly he looked beneath the surface of the words, and understanding, for the first time in his life, what his father really meant, he answered, wholly unconscious of any incongruity:

"She is not coming to the studio again, father."

It was so unexpected that it surprised even Signor Carlo, and he asked:

"You have not discharged Leonora?"

"No, father. She was engaged only for this painting, and she told me this morning that she would not come again."

"She must have been behind the screen yesterday, when I was in your studio. I am sorry," Signor Carlo said.

"I am not sorry," Antonio replied. "Everything is as it should be, father."

"My Anthony, everything is as it should be when we are wise and strong enough to make it serve a good purpose, as God makes the wrath of man to praise Him." Then there was another long silence, when Signor Carlo betrayed the tenor of his thoughts by repeating: "'It is woe to the world because of offenses, and needs be that offenses come; but it is woe unto him by whom the offense cometh.'"

Antonio felt the perspiration on his forehead as memory leaped back to the little inn bedroom on the Rhine. They were the very words which his father had whispered when he kissed him in the night.

When he entered the breakfast room the next morning, Antonio found the table set for only one. The butler handed him a letter from his father, together with the astonishing information that he left Florence the night before upon a long journey.

Hurt and angry, Antonio laid the unopened letter to one side and deliberately ate his breakfast. When he was alone, however, his hands trembled so that he could hardly break the seal. He was obliged to lay the letter open before him. He could not hold it while he read. Clutching the table with his hands, he bent over it and read:

MY ANTHONY:

I go without saying good-bye in words, because it would be more than I could bear. You have always believed that everything was as it should be because it was as you thought that I wished it. But no one is wise enough to be a safe criterion for another. Only by standing alone can one know himself and be the divinity which shapes his ends. You are master of yourself, my Anthony, and I pledge you my word and my love to accept without question or criticism every result you have accomplished when I return. My bankers understand that your credit is limited only by my resources.

For myself I regret the blunder in the studio; yet, if your eyes had not been opened you might have traversed in ignorance, as I did, a pleasant path, the end of which I alone can dread, because I have learned the difficulties of deserting it, and know the dust and ashes of a burned out passion, that follow and stifle and choke and smart, world without end.

I painted my "Morning" first, my Anthony, and ever since I have been working out my "Night." Your life has seen some trouble, but never the blackness which alone can give you a true appreciation of the supernal beauty of dawn. The canvas in your studio lacks only that appreciation of being perfect. In the darkest hours that come to you, find sympathy and comfort in misery by putting your soul upon the canvas, transforming it to "Night." And after the night, God grant it, after the night, then the "Morning," precursor, for you, of a new, eternal day. You cannot do better for yourself or for art.

Antonio crushed the letter in his trembling hands, lighted it by the spirit lamp under his coffee urn, laid it on his plate and watched it burn—watched and repeated the words which he remembered from years ago in the inn garden on the Rhine: "After the night, then the morning. You cannot do better."

If Leonora could only have opened Antonio's eyes to see himself as she made him see his father, she would have shown him a new Heaven as well

as a new earth. But she couldn't. Neither could his father. The only important paragraph to him in the letter related to the "Night" and the "Morning," and he knew that, till they were accomplished, his father would never say to him, "You cannot do better." Sullenly watching the pavement, he walked to the studio. The attendant handed him Leonora's duplicate key. He shuddered as he took it, entered, locked the door and stood alone, facing himself in the long mirror. No mortal had ever been so hopelessly fettered by freedom. He sought the mirror earnestly for something there of the master that must guide him. It was only Antonio—Antonio and one ambition. But the thought of the ambition roused him. He remembered his father's admonition; and, sure that there could never come to him a darker hour, he set himself to the task. He put only neutrals on his palette and worked with the feverish eagerness of one possessed.

The roseate morning faded into twilight and the twilight into night at the touch of the master's brush. The smile which parted the lips became a sigh. The too human eyes forgot their madness. They glistened as though plunged in the fountain of tears.

Often he glanced toward the divan, as though Leonora were still posing there; but it was only when the rapid work was finished that he started back with a cry of astonishment, looking from the canvas to the empty divan, realizing that it was Leonora as she had posed there yesterday, Leonora at the tragic moment which was burned upon his memory, the ideal of what he had painted today. He had unwittingly reproduced that moment's intensity. He had reproduced Leonora, infinitely more the living, breathing Leonora, though it was what he had seen for but one moment, when, for the first time in the three weeks, she forgot to smile. And the deepened tints and darker shadows thrust into marvelous, living, almost breathing reality the inimitable beauty of Leonora as Goddess of the Night, where, the day be-

fore, as he compared his work with the beautiful model, he had confessed to himself that his copy was but a frozen counterfeit.

Antonio's face was pale, as he stood before the painting just as he had stood before the model yesterday; but he felt, at last, the artist's exultation over work well done. And for the first time in his life he longed for his father's verdict. With the thought, however, that he could not have it, came the fact that, after all, it was not the goal of his ambition gained. It was only another step. Aloud he repeated: "After the night, then the morning." It was the only thing which could be, must be, more beautiful. He must accomplish it.

Instantly the "Night" lost its charm for him. He carried the great canvas on its easel to a dark corner of the studio, and, turning away, threw himself on the divan to dream of the future. But the past intruded. His eye fell on Leonora's purse, where she had thrown it on the floor. He picked it up and sat looking at it. He caught the faint aroma of the delicate perfume which always clung about Leonora. It was a pretty piece of silk embroidery, doubtless her own needlework. Lifting it, he slowly inhaled the odor. Almost involuntarily he touched it to his lips. It startled him, and by way of apology he set himself to thinking of a time when, in spite of his great need, he had struck a hand that was holding gold to him. It resulted in his emptying the purse and dropping it into a drawer in his desk, then substituting a gold piece for each silver coin and sending it to Leonora by a messenger with a note:

I am sorry that anything offended you in my studio. I very greatly regret it. And I also realize that I did not pay you for your service as much as you were worth to me. If you will be as generous now as you were in aiding me with my painting, you will keep the accompanying sum and permit me to retain the purse you left. If not, I shall simply have to return the purse as it is, and always know that you are unwilling to forgive me.

The messenger brought no answer except Leonora's signature on the de-

livery slip, which was quite satisfactory to Antonio. He looked upon everything precisely as he had through his whole life—as chapters or paragraphs in the fairy tale of life, of no possible importance except as they led up to the grand climax, when he should return a conqueror to claim his own. With a sigh of relief he said: "The night is finished; now for the morning!"

## IX

ANTONIO really thought his night was finished. Mina was, of course, to be his Goddess of Dawn, as well as the spirit of his new day; but he felt the impossibility of painting such a piece without a model. Days went by in trying to construct some plan. Then it suddenly came to him that in the "Night" he had completed the half of his triumph, and that, as Mina was beside him when he failed, she should by every right be with him to witness his final victory. There seemed to him every poetic and artistic justice in the thought that Mina herself should be the model, and in the characteristic bigotry of his self-centered conceptions, he at once resolved that it should be so.

Almost as abruptly as he had left Boppard for Florence, he left Florence for Boppard, with just the same end in view, simply the accomplishment of his one ambition. He was not an ardent lover hurrying to his lady, for he stopped over a day, as near as San Goar, and with his sketching case went up the river, believing that he should make new studies of the rock itself before he could reproduce that fatal dream.

He did not make the studies, however, for no sooner had he reached the spot than the old atmosphere enveloped him. He sat all day upon the river bank, only half conscious, living again through the dream which drove him there. Like everything else, when it was past he had forgotten it, but as he came again under the shadow of the Lorelei, it returned to him as vividly as when he had shut his eyes in the attic closet. It brought cold

perspiration to his forehead, as he suddenly realized that the surroundings in his dream were identical with his actual studio in Florence—even to the finished picture of the "Night," on its easel in a dark corner. He grew faint and cold as he looked across the dream studio, and saw that, while he worked, the divan was empty. He was painting the picture without a model.

He sprang to his feet, stamped the ground and laughed to throw off the hallucination, but it followed him to Boppard, where he passed old playmates grown to men and women, and men and women growing old; but not one of them recognized him. He smiled at the contortions of the fat landlord of the inn while he apologized for the poverty of the best his place afforded, remembering how his ears had tingled, not many years gone, from the boxing he received from those same fat hands.

A stranger opened Mina's door to him. She could only tell him that years ago Mina's mother "came into some money," for her education, and had taken her away to a city.

Angry, Antonio turned his back on Boppard, feeling that again Mina had deserted him when he had most need of her. Just as once he was sorry he had ever made a picture for her on the wall, he regretted now the years he had spent in perfecting himself in art for her. It was not natural for him to be thwarted. It went hard with him. But he was too proud to make an effort to learn where she had gone. He returned alone to Florence, to Florence that could stir the soul of Dante to strains almost divine; to Florence, the sweet symphony of every sound that finds in life a chord vibratile; to Florence, where for six months he lived an utterly empty life, sitting sullenly in his studio for hours together, berating his father and Mina, his guide and inspiration, for having deserted him. Mechanically he prepared a canvas for the companion piece to the "Night," but it stood untouched. How could he begin the morning when it was still night?



Frequently letters came from his father, letters which only such a man could write; vivid pen pictures from America, then from China, forever telling him where he had been, but never where he was going, giving him no opportunity to reply. It was well for the maintenance of his purpose in going away, for if Antonio could have found him he would have gone to him. Beyond that one desire he had not a single incentive. The café, the club, the drive, the ball, all became repulsive to him the moment his father was no longer a part of them. His father had been so completely his companion and comrade that Florence simply lost all charm because freedom deprived him of the pleasure of being free. Outside of the instigations of his father, his individuality had never changed nor broadened an atom from the one all-absorbing ambition with which he grasped his father's hand upon the Rhine.

After six months of absolute independence he stood in the studio, aimlessly wondering what to do, without a temptation to be vicious or an incentive to be virtuous. He began rummaging in a drawer, looking for some sketch which might suggest new work to him, when he came suddenly on Leonora's purse. It looked up at him reproachfully, as he drew it from its gloom, where it had lain forgotten all those months. Again he pressed it to his lips. There was still the lingering fragrance of Leonora. It brought back again the atmosphere of those ideal weeks when a beautiful woman had turned drudgery to ecstasy.

"If I had known life then as I know it now," he said to himself, "I should have realized something more than a model, and appreciated the benefit of having Leonora's help." Then, through the door which Leonora's embroidered purse had opened, there slipped a suggestion into his empty life. It was like the whisper of palm groves which dreams bring to the exile from Ceylon, sleeping, with his spade for a pillow, in the dismal diamond mines of South Africa. It was like moonlight dart-

ing through a cleft in murky clouds, garnishing with fairy fancies the grim phenomena of night. It was like perfume permeating fetid air—the thought that Leonora was still somewhere, and might again be there. It was night. He had no thought that Leonora could change it. But stars make the night beautiful. Night dew refreshes withered flowers. Night breezes lift the wilted leaf. At least she could rid the night of its tormenting loneliness and help him to accomplish something, if not the ideal masterpiece with which he still vaguely hoped to please his father on his return.

The wish was father to the thought. He sat there dreaming till something of himself came back to him and the desire became a dominant demand. He left the studio to accomplish it. The spring twilight had faded into night, a beautiful, scintillating, Italian night. Antonio looked up at the stars and smiled. It was a pleasanter premonition than had come to him under the shadow of the Lorelei. He walked out to the Roman Gate, where he had first met Leonora. She had told him of her home only that it was somewhere in the vicinity. The highway, beyond the gate, was even then the most aristocratic suburb of Florence, but many a narrow lane crept up the low hillside, through clusters of poorer cottages.

Antonio had nothing distinctly in his mind except to study the surroundings, to be nearer Leonora while he evolved some plan. He was slowly sauntering, enjoying the new hope and the stilly brilliance of the moonless night, when a rare voice, softly singing, caught his ear. It came from the low balcony of one of the picturesque villas he was passing, and he was too fond of music to resist the temptation to linger and listen as an ideal Italian contralto voice, soft and low, sang the old Portuguese love song:

"Day in melting purple dying,  
Blossoms all around me sighing,  
Zephyrs with my ringlets playing,  
Fragrance from the lilies straying,  
Ye but waken my distress;  
I am tired of loneliness."

Antonio crept nearer.

"Thou, to whom I love to harken,  
Come, ere yet the shadows darken.  
Thou, my soul, do but deceive me;  
Say thou'rt true and I'll believe thee.  
Veil, if ill, thy heart's intent.  
Let me think thee innocent.

"Save thy toiling. Spare thy treasure.  
All I ask is friendship's pleasure.  
Let the shining ore lie darkling.  
Bring no gem with luster sparkling.  
Gifts of gold are naught to me;  
I would only gaze on thee.

"Paint for thee the deep sensation—  
Pleasure in participation.  
Tell to thee the high wrought feeling—  
Ecstasy in but revealing  
What is torture when compressed  
In a lone, unfriended breast?"

Closer and closer the song dragged him, till, shielded by shrubbery, Antonio stood almost at the base of the low balcony.

"Absent still? Ah, come and bless me!  
Let these lips again caress thee.  
Once in terror I could fly thee;  
Now, I nothing could deny thee.  
In a look, if death there be,  
Come, and I will look on thee."

The singer rose languidly from a bench in the shadow and crossed the balcony, passing through the soft light from an open door. Antonio stepped quickly forward, whispering, "Leonora!"

"Signor Antonio!" she exclaimed, coming to the balcony rail.

"Leonora," he said in a low voice, quivering with earnestness, "believe me, I did not know that it was you. The singing, the beautiful singing, stopped me. I did not mean to discover a secret; but, since I know it, Leonora, let me help you. You were calling someone. Tell me who it is, and I will go and bring him to you."

She leaned over the rail. She was smiling. He could see her teeth glisten, even in the night. "I was only singing a dear little song, Signor Antonio," she said, "singing it just as it was written by someone else."

"But you were singing it to someone, Leonora. I know it. You were singing it with your very soul."

She leaned still lower and whispered:

"If my soul was singing, signor, if my heart was calling anyone, it could have been only you."

*Facilis descensus Averni!*

Antonio had made the long journey to Boppard, after weary years of waiting, only to find that Mina was not there. He followed the flight of a fleeting thought as far as the Roman Gate, to find the glorious Goddess of the Night waiting, and calling him.

"Teach me the words as they are written, Leonora; for my heart aches to be singing them to you," he said. "My father has been away six months and may not return for years. I am desperately lonely. I have done nothing worth a florin since you left me. Come back to me, Leonora. Not as a model—no, no! Only to sit and talk to me and make me happy, so that I can work."

Leonora drew back a little and her voice was peculiar as she said: "Men's tongues are so pliable, Signor Antonio. They say sweet things to women without sincerity, yet I, a silly girl, know it and love to hear them—when they come from you."

"But I mean them all and so much more, Leonora—so much more that words cannot say."

Leonora was looking up into the stars, and her eyes and her teeth were brighter than they as Antonio saw them from just below. His hands were on the balcony rail.

"But you are the wonderful young artist," she said slowly, "the handsomest man in Florence, the great Signor Antonio that we all rave over. What am I, that thou shouldst be mindful of me and mean such things, if you say them to me?"

"You are everything, Leonora!" he interrupted. "I need you! Come and help me with your friendship."

"All I ask is friendship's pleasure."

she sang; then looking down into his eyes, she asked: "Friendship for how long, Signor Antonio?"

"Forever!" he replied resolutely. "Can we not be friends forever, Leonora?"

She did not reply. She was looking up into the sky again. Soft and low, she sang the last refrain of the song:

"Once in terror I could fly thee;  
Now I nothing could deny thee.  
In a look, if death there be,  
Come, and I will look on thee."

With the last note she leaned over the balcony again, letting her hands touch his. It was the first time he had ever touched them thus. He caught them and pressed them fiercely to his lips. She did not check him, but while he kissed them she whispered:

"How can I promise you such a little thing as friendship, for so long as forever, signor? Let me search myself and see if I can understand just what you mean, and if it is possible for me to be just what you want me to be. All that I can promise now is that I will come to the studio tomorrow at sunset. Now please go quickly, Signor Antonio. I want to think. Good night—that evil word which severs those it should unite. Good night."

She disappeared through the open door, but the night was marvelously beautiful as Antonio walked slowly back again, through the winding ways of the fair City of Flowers.

## X

MORNING brought misgivings, but Antonio's was not a nature to dally with doubts. He brushed them to one side. The fever had started in his veins. He knew little and cared nothing about prudence or self-control. He only wondered if Leonora understood and meant what she said, or if it was only because it was written in the song. A certain sense of honor, gathered according to his misconceptions from his father, was firmly imbedded in him and he had no intention that act or word of his should conflict with his notions of a gentleman. So he wondered just how much Leonora meant by what she said, and formed a careful code for himself which should protect the pretty model, and which, he felt, if his father only knew, would dis-

sipate any fears of broken hearts he might have entertained.

Possibly it was the result of the unusual consideration which had occupied his thoughts all day, or it may have been the fever in his veins, which made his heart throb, his hands tremble and his brain fail him in confusion when, with the sunset, Leonora came.

The eyes, the smile, the perfect grace, the beautiful harmony—it was Leonora, a little matured and emphasized, but—was it Leonora?

She was dressed as only Italian women can dress, in that exquisite taste where faultless drapery is but an accessory graced by the wearer. The fabric was of the costliest, and here and there a jewel flashed. Was that why his hand trembled as he hurried to place a chair for her? He had followed his father as idol of the best society of Florence. Such things were not new to him.

Leonora watched his pale face and averted eyes, and her own grew troubled. She only touched the back of the chair with her fingers and said:

"I may not sit while you are standing, Signor Antonio. We should not forget that I am only what you have made of your model."

So they stood for a moment, facing each other. In his embarrassment Antonio dared not look up and could not speak. The troubled expression grew darker on Leonora's face. She had taken the time she asked for to think, and had come to the studio as she promised. But she faced an entirely new Antonio—as new to himself as to her. She had stooped to conquer once, then voluntarily abandoned the victory. She had returned feeling that the past was so much already won. But in the sudden change she realized that the past, the present and the future were all lost, unless she could quickly find some way to stoop again.

Every expression of her face betrayed it all. If Antonio had looked he would have known. He would have seen it in her eyes as they turned from his face and moved anxiously over the studio, as though crying out for some-

thing to help her recover her old position. They rested on the great picture, "Night," covered from the dust in the dark corner. Something seemed to call her to it. Quickly crossing the room, she lifted the drapery, standing with her back nearly turned to Antonio. He did not move. He simply watched her, dreading lest the cruel change in the picture offend her and check the new hopes which had been fanned into flame in him.

Only her eyebrows contracted till they formed an unbroken line over desperate eyes. Only her face grew paler than Antonio's. Only her chin quivered and the lips parted over the glistening teeth. Only the fingers of the hand which held the covering clenched fiercely in the cloth. Then, slowly, without moving, she said: "It is not what I was, Signor Antonio, but it is—it is what I have been since then. The crude, weak purity of sunrise was too calm for me, too passively susceptible, too much at the mercy of fleeting lights and passing shadows, too quick to catch and too quick to lose the rainbows in the mists, too uncertain of what the next would be—rain or sunshine. You did not like the weakness when you saw it in the picture, signor. As beautiful as your painting was, it had a fault. That fault troubled you. You found it; you made the change it needed. You gave it strength—and infinitely greater beauty.

"I told you once that your picture taught me what I ought to be. But when I tried to be it, I saw the weakness in me, just as you saw it in the picture, and while you were changing the painting, I, without knowing it was your wish, was making the same change in myself."

She turned, and, looking steadily into Antonio's face, said slowly: "I have been black as night since then."

The sudden shock threw Antonio off his guard, and for a moment into something deeper and truer in himself than he had ever realized. Hurrying to her, he exclaimed: "Leonora! You don't know what you are saying! You mean as beautiful as the night."

The troubled look left her face as he came to her. Her lips parted as they had parted once before when she saw victory. Her eyes flashed and laughed. Antonio forgot the deep inner self. His blood was on fire. Leonora had never been so ravishingly beautiful. Her voice thrilled like strong wine in every nerve. She was speaking again. What did it signify that she said: "Signor, I know the meaning of the words; I meant them?" Her face was white as Carrara but beautiful as the Medici.

"In my timid first touch of dawn I loved you. I came to be your model, not for the money but because I loved you, and longed to be near you. My heart was torn and bleeding with the morning rains when I had to go away. I wanted to die, but Death would not come to me and—I was a coward; I dared not go to him. Then I saw the weakness and the folly of it—of the sunrise—just as you saw it, signor. And I swept the sorrow and love and all that out of my heart, as you swept it out of the painting. I have been as bad as a woman can be since then, but as happy, through it all, as the angels. One of the King's high officers saw me on the river while I was wandering there. He pretended to make love to me, and suddenly I saw the pleasure and profit of it all, if it was only play, and I left behind me forever the anguish of letting it be real. He took me to Rome, and it was five lovely months before he grew tired of pretending, and I came home loaded down with dresses and jewels and gold, for he was very rich—and just as happy as when I went away.

"Through my three weeks here in this studio, Signor Antonio, the fires of my unreasoning love burned and tortured me. You knew that I was not really happy, and that you had not truly painted me, or you would never have made this change. So, after my day of suffering, there has come the clear, cool, perfect night. There's no more bitter heartbreaking for me, Signor Antonio, now that I know the beauty, without the intensity, the joy of life in living it, without the agony of trying

to believe it so fiercely true. For all the world, signor, you would not turn that painting back again to what it was. Neither would I turn back. Else I had never dared to come again to you, even for this once; to you, Signor Antonio, to whom, of all the world, I long to be—closer and closer.

"I have told you all about it, for I would not have you think me any better than I am. If I had not told you you would never have known. No one else in Florence knows. They all think me like the spotless snow. But I thought you would feel better about it if I told you, and you do. Your eyes are looking into mine. They were afraid to at first, lest they see there that I loved you still, and was ready for more suffering when the time came for me to go again. That is all past and gone, signor, and now, if you think me pretty, you can walk home with me and have a glass of wine and a cigarette on the little balcony, while I dress for the evening. We will have supper together, and then, if you like, you can take me to the Opera. After that you can tell me if you still think that you would like for us to be friends—forever—as you said last night.

"Don't answer me in words just now, signor. It has been hard for me to say what I have. Only, if you think my plan a pretty one, you can kiss me, just once, if you like, and we will start."

In bewildered madness Antonio caught her in his arms and drank the smile from the parted lips which came to his.

It is only the whited sepulchers in this world of hidden sin, parading in robes of righteousness embroidered with sham chastity, that frown upon detected indiscretions, while they grin behind their masks of scorn and at the street corners thank God that they are not as other men—they are more cautious against observation.

## XI

THE days which followed were hours. Months flew by in a delirium which knew no calendar. With each new hour

Antonio reveled in some new paradise created for him by his Goddess of the Night, till his brain reeled in the voluptuous melody of the beautiful nocturnal symphony. He was not so proud of his painting as he was of his goddess, and he was the envy of his friends in Florence, as in Boppard he had been the envy of his little enemies.

The past was forgotten between them; the future they ignored. They lived in the omnific spontaneity of a supernal Now.

Only in chance remarks Antonio learned that Leonora had been left an orphan, when a little girl, and placed in a convent, from which she had not been free two days when she first met him, and that the death of a near relative left her mistress of the pretty villa.

Possibly, had the friendship been real love on Antonio's part, it might have run less smoothly. Had it been with anyone but Leonora it might not have been at all; for she was surely an artist's ideal, and while Antonio threw himself with utter abandon into the mad revels of the scintillating night, Leonora never relaxed for an instant the pilot's eye upon the Polar Star of her hope, nor the pilot's hand upon the helm which guided them. She had stooped to conquer, and, knowing Antonio better than he knew himself, she felt that the conquest was yet far from complete. Reckless of cost or consequence, she lavished all the charms which heaven had given her to be to Antonio the best of whatever he would at the moment, watching every straw for the way of each wandering breeze.

That which gave her the least encouragement was the change which she noticed in his painting. His early triumphs in art had all been in brilliant coloring. Now—it was only a freak, he told her carelessly, when she spoke of it—his work grew constantly darker.

"Don't you see, my star," he said, "how, in the 'Night' for the first time I discovered the beauty of neutrals?"



And now I cannot drop them any more than I could drop you, beautiful goddess."

"But the people do not pay you so much for them as they paid for the others," she said. "It is sordid to think of money as compensation or a criterion for your wonderful work. I know, *caro mio*, and I am not necessary—only as a guide to popular appreciation."

"But there's another side to that, my savage little critic," he said, laughing and kissing her. "With you beside me I paint twice as fast as I ever dreamed of painting before. I never began to make so much money. Come, let's go out and find a way to spend some of it this minute. Nothing else is anything—nothing but you."

It was during the second winter of their friendship, before a single side breeze had blown to chill the fever in Antonio's veins, that there came the grandest opportunity which Florence could furnish for him to set his beautiful candle on a candlestick and flash before his envious friends his gorgeous gem. A grand company of celebrated stars was coming to the opera house, supporting a new prima donna already laden with laurels from the Northern courts. All Florence would be there. The boxes commanded fabulous prices, but, had they been ten times higher, Leonora would have had the costliest of them all—the one at the right of the royal dome.

Grand Opera is Italy's ideal exposition, and every bud of beauty blooms resplendent in that lost Eden. The royal box is the cynosure, while those next it benefit from proximity; but on that opening night it was only reflected glory which reached the King's people. Leonora was the queen—as gorgeous as God and art could make a woman. She sat in state, alone. Antonio would have no guests that night. Even his own chair he pushed far back in the shadows behind the drapery, so that, unseen, he might revel with the rest in Leonora's matchless beauty. In a waking dream he sat there, drunken with ecstasy, the fa-

vored slave, on whom alone those beautiful, wonderful eyes would turn to smile. He knelt without a rival to a symposium of perfection, a rose without a thorn, a diamond without dust.

No wonder he was happy—or thought he was happy. No wonder he was proud and pleased. But are those the sentiments of love? Deep down within him somewhere, as much as it lay in him to love at all, he loved Mina. The bond which bound him to Leonora seemed as different as day from night. Had Leonora told him at that moment that in the morning she was to marry someone else, much as he might have regretted it, he would not have felt that he had the claim or the right to prevent it. He would not have felt that she was wronging him. It would have been very different if Mina had said it. He would instantly have admitted that Mina might have faults—he thought he knew of some. To him Leonora had none. He had never known an unkind glance from her, a thoughtless or annoying act, a motion that was not grace, a tone that was not melody. He knew that Mina could not be so beautiful, but what did it signify? She was as much as ever the Morning, after the Night, for whose beatific dawn he was waiting. Leonora was the Luna of his loneliness; Mina was the hidden sun of all his hope. Leonora brought rest and comfort, like the night, but she did not lift the soul as the sun lifts the mists, to be majestic clouds about the mountain peaks. She gave relief, not joy; ecstasy, not happiness; hiding life's night specters in soft and subtle shimmers of silver, not throbbing like the sun in nature's breast, impelling every energy to grand achievements. Antonio felt all this, little as he understood or tried to understand it. Stranger but not less true, he was as sure that he was worthy of the coming of his dawn as he was that sometime, in some way, it would come to him.

The overture ended without his having heard a note; much as he loved music, he was so enveloped in adora-

tion that Leonora alone had charms for him. The curtain rose without his glancing toward the stage. What was the opera to him? A grand ovation greeted the new prima donna when she reached her first climax, but it seemed only pandemonium to the man hidden behind the draperies. He was angry that even the prima donna should distract for a moment the attention which Leonora should receive. She and her ilk were but the satellites of an hour. Leonora was the fixed star in beauty's firmament. The meteor on the stage would flash and in the flame expire. Alcyone, Queen of the Pleiades, alone was immutable.

The boisterous bravas became intolerable. In a moment of impatience Antonio glanced toward the stage. The applauding throngs and glittering illusions were swept to oblivion. Only the central figure stood, stark alone, her eyes fixed on Antonio's, as he clutched the rail and gasped:

"Mina! My Mina!"

## XII

THE curtain fell and Antonio shrank back into the shadows.

Leonora was watching him. He caught her eye. He was trembling. He said sullenly:

"This uproar is horrible. Let us leave the fiends to howl it out. Come, I have had enough. We will go."

Leonora's white teeth glistened as though she smiled. Her eyes shone like bright stars. She shook her head.

"I am ill. I am going," Antonio said angrily. "Come quickly, before a crowd of insufferable idiots fills the box to gloat on you. Come."

"Wait a little, signor," Leonora said softly. "The singing of your friend is perfect. It will make you well again."

"I will not wait," he retorted. "Come, I say. This opera is insufferable. Come."

She lifted her fan till it hid her face from the rest, and her eyes and teeth flashed in the mockery of a smile as she tossed him a kiss from the tip of her

finger and shook her head. Antonio stood up and took her arm, repeating: "Come."

She looked up into his sullen eyes. His face was white, as she had seen it once before. His lips were contracted. He was biting his mustache. She had seen that, too, once before. Very slowly she said:

"When morning dawns, night disappears. But till the morning, Signor Antonio is mine. One heart will break, as your father said, but it should not signify; for it will not be yours or hers. I so much admire this new opera and, most of all, the pretty prima donna with the blue eyes and the golden hair that, please you, *caro mio*, we will remain. It is my last, you know, and I must make the most of it."

Antonio shrank into the shadows again. Friends came and went, but he did not notice them. The curtain rose and fell and rose and fell, but he saw nothing, heard nothing.

At the close of the last act, Leonora said softly:

"It was a great opera. The east grows bright for you, but—oh, *caro mio*, look up just once more and smile on Leonora, just once, to give me strength for this last hour. No? Not even one parting smile? Well, take me quickly home, *caro mio*. No, please don't speak to me; it would not be in the voice I love. Only take me home. I want to be alone."

Silently he obeyed. She stepped lightly to the balcony, where two years before he had pleaded for the friendship she had given with lavish loyalty. Then, turning quickly, she laid her hand on his and said:

"Good night, Signor Antonio, and good-bye."

They were beyond the confines of the walls which sheltered Mina, and away from the air which she was breathing. Antonio caught Leonora's hand and held it firmly, for she was turning away.

"How can we understand each other tonight, Leonora?" he said fiercely. "Wait until tomorrow."

"For what shall I wait till tomorrow,

Signor Antonio?" she asked. "The old, old story has been told so many times. You met me by the Roman Gate. You wanted me to come to you because I was pretty. And I, I wanted to come because I loved you. Since then I have drained love's reservoir to win your love, and only tonight have I discovered why it was impossible. I let you think that I was poor, and shamed myself to be a model because it brought me near to you. Again you sought me and I plunged into shame because I loved you and wanted your love. When I came to the studio and saw how you had changed, I knew that you had been thinking by daylight, differently from the way you dreamed by night, and comparing me with the model your father loved, who followed him, with their baby boy, when he left her and went away to marry someone in the North; of how he came back alone, and has always been alone since then. You were saying to yourself: 'If I love Leonora and let her love me, some day she will make my life miserable.' I read it in your face. I went to your great painting for time to think, to think how I could cross the barrier you had raised. And the painting told me what I ought to be to be pleasing to you. It whispered to me what to say, and I said it. I told you a lie which swept away your fears and gave me what I prayed for, just one more opportunity to try to win your love. And but for this—the golden-haired prima donna—I believe you would have loved me. It was all for that that I told the lie. It was all for that that I have been to you whatever you would. I was never in Rome in my life. I had not been one day away from home. My parents left me all I have. No lips but yours have ever kissed me. No hand but yours has ever caressed me. No arms but yours have ever held me—or ever shall. The story is told. For what should I wait till tomorrow?"

"You *shall* wait, Leonora!" Antonio interrupted.

"Oh, I could say it all tonight! I

have a woman's heart—a Florentine pride—an Italian passion!" she said, shuddering, trying to free her hand. "Words, words are pressing hard upon my tongue and crowding to my lips. Oh, I could say them all tonight. I asked you to go. I wanted to be alone where I could not speak them. They are so different from words which I would speak to Signor Antonio. They burn in me. They fight like demons to be free of me. They howl in me to tell you that where Leonora has set her love and lost, no other woman's love shall find a cushioned throne. They shriek for me to curse you—you whom I love! They goad me to warn you that the path is thick with thorns which leads up to your morning, and that your sunrise will be behind a cloud which hides it from you; that your day will dawn in darkness; that the only time you'll ever look into the blue eyes you love will be across this lifeless breast!

"Dear Mother of Heaven, what am I saying to him? Oh, *caro mio*, for God's sake, forget it and go before I can say any more! Go, go! I tell you I want to be alone!"

Leonora snatched her hand away. A night breeze had touched Antonio's burning forehead with its cool fingers and was gone. The fragrance of a flower had filled the air for him and fled. Cringing, he looked up. He was alone on the balcony.

Not a star was shining in the sky. The night was black and cold. Slowly he walked back, along the damp and stony ways of the Gehenna of the Arno.

### XIII

ANTONIO was sorry for Leonora, wretchedly sorry for her, for he was not a brute. But he felt that she had been unjust to him. He knew she did not mean what she said—and it was that, most of all, which troubled him. Even while the curse was flying from her lips, the words came back to him faster than she spoke them. They were the very words he had heard in

his attic closet. He did not understand them then, and had quickly forgotten; but they echoed back from Boppard when Leonora spoke them, as though he had heard them only the night before.

"It is impossible," he said to himself; "it is absurd. I will prove it false at once." And he turned toward the Grand Hotel, where the prima donna, Wilhelmina von Steinberg, was to reside during the Opera season.

He walked slowly, more in dread than in anticipation, for so much of that fatal dream had already come true that deep in his heart he trusted it better than himself. And while he walked he wondered how it was possible that so often he had heard and repeated that name without knowing by instinct that it was Mina of dear old Steinberg.

When he reached the hotel he learned that the object of his search was being entertained at a grand banquet given by wealthy Germans of Florence. He remembered then that he had been invited to the banquet and had declined for the greater pleasure of a little dinner alone with Leonora after the Opera. So now he mingled with the promiscuous crowd in the corridors outside the banquet hall—dogs waiting for crumbs—till he could endure it no longer, and crept into his own house like a culprit as the sky grew gray with morning.

An overwhelming fear possessed him. For a while he lay trembling on a couch, then paced the grand *salon*, where twelve years before his father had brought him, a bit of raw material to be woven, warp and woof, for Art and Mina.

From a frail lad he had become a robust, strong man. From a stupid charity scholar he had become a master of books. The ragged waif who drew the pictures on the walls of Boppard stood at the pinnacle of Art, ready to grasp the crown. That was his father's work. He knew it, and that the rest was his. He paused before a long mirror, shook his fist at himself and muttered:

"You mangy cur! You cringing coward! You are not worthy of the rags which covered you in Boppard. Frightened by the fantastic fancies of a boy's dream and the curses of an angry woman! Be a man! Go and see Mina! Go!"

He passed the morning trying to instill into his heart the courage which he lacked, and as early as possible went again to the Grand Hotel, sending his card to the prima donna. Perspiration stood in beads on his forehead when it came back to him on the silver salver, with the message that Mademoiselle von Steinberg begged to be excused. He was angry, but in the silence of his studio he realized that he should not have approached her in that way. Even if it was more than a fancy that she recognized him in the box, "Anthony Winthrop" could mean nothing of him to her. He dared not go again to the hotel, but determined to see her that evening at the Opera.

Time dragged mercilessly. Each tick of the clock seemed to turn back and mock him and laugh as it sauntered slowly away into eternity. He drank a glass of strong wine and threw himself on the divan.

Oh, the blessed oblivion of sleep when time stands still in one's pathway. But when he woke it was from a frightful dream. His boat was being dashed against the rocks and angry waves were engulfing him under the shadow of the Lorelei. It was Mina's face he saw upon the ledge—Mina, looking down and laughing at him. He shuddered; but it was growing dark, and quickly writing his old name on a card, and under it, "Remember Boppard," he hurried to the opera house. This time the card was returned to him without an intervening salver by a greasy fellow who in execrable Italian told him that Madame the Prima Donna did not remember Boppard.

He went away vowing that he had knelt for the last time to Mina; but love is an unknown quantity, and the next morning found him seeking apologies for her, saying to himself that she did not know what he had accom-

plished—that he was the great Signor Antonio, of whom the whole world was talking—that he had done it all for her. It was natural she should think that he had deserted her in Boppard, had gone away and forgotten her; that he was only trying to pick her up again because she had become a great singer. When she knew, she would, of course, regret it all and see him only in the light of the conquering crusader returning to his lady, just as he had always planned.

He wrote her a letter. He put it in the simplest of German, precisely as they had always talked together. It said:

MY MINA:

You have not forgotten Boppard. Only, you are angry. But you are wronging me. Let me come to you, Mina, for the sake of the dear old days, and tell you about it. I have been studying all these years because you told me to. If you will only let me bring you to see my work, I think you will be pleased with it and will say I am doing better. Let me come to you, Mina.

To Antonio's surprise a reply was returned by the bearer of his note. It was written in faultless French, to "Monsieur Anthony Winthrop," saying:

I have watched your progress in your professional career with very great interest. My early faith in your ability is more than justified. I need no further proof than the abundant evidence I have already had, to congratulate you on your grand success. Therefore the more earnestly I entreat you to be a man worthy of your great reputation as an artist.

Owing, as I do, everything that I am to your father, I shall not rely upon my own convictions when I can again have the benefit of his counsel. I shall still be in Florence when he returns next month, and if he wishes me to meet you then I shall consent. Till then, wishing you all success and prosperity, I speak my own mind when I bid you remain loyal to your beautiful friend.

#### XIV

EVEN then it was not directly of Mina, but of his father, that Antonio sat thinking, the letter lying open before him. He was thinking back to the day when he reached Florence; of

what his father had said about Mina being the best that was in her for him, urging him to be the best that was in him for Mina. He thought of the infinite pains his father had taken to perfect, in a real fruition, the ideal dreams of the little lovers whom he found beside the wall. Thinking on, he realized what his father meant when he stood beside the painting and saw love's labor threatened; and he knew, then, why his father went away, leaving him to work out his own salvation, as he must if he would benefit by the result, leaving him only the potent admonition: "Call that the 'Morning,' and call this the 'Night.'"

He frankly admitted to himself that he had made no effort, since his father went away, not even in art, but had been living contented in the night; and yet, when his thoughts reverted to Mina, he could not reverse the basic theories of his life and comprehend that it was with him and not with his art that Mina was, or had a right to be, dissatisfied. He read the letter again and smiled. Except for the parts which concerned his father, it amused him. It was only a touch of exasperating feminine jealousy—only because she did not understand. It would blow away. He smiled again when he thought of the fool he had made of himself during the past four and twenty hours. It was that which he chiefly regretted, and he determined not to go again to the Opera. Mina should see the box always empty. She should know that, while he had nothing more to do with Leonora, he still resented her position. He was brave enough with himself and his conclusions, but late that night, when he knew that the performance was over, he stole silently to the river drive and stood leaning against the heavy stone abutment along the Arno, opposite Mina's hotel. He stood watching the windows of her apartments, with all the pathos of Italian passion, finding consolation, even by so much, in being near to her.

Possibly it was the power of his longing which called her. At all



events, she came to the window, threw open the long sash and, half sitting on the low, fending balustrade of the protecting balcony, she leaned back against the carved casement and for a long time looked up the silver reaches of the Arno, beyond the Ponte Vecchio. Soft light from the chamber fell over her. She was as distinctly outlined, almost, as upon the stage, but she could not see the living shade among the shadows of the deserted street below. And as he stood looking up, Antonio thought of the Lorelei, the rushing river and the bewildered boatman. The hidden light seemed emanating from the cloud of golden hair which fell about her, and he noticed with a shudder that her position on the window ledge was almost identical with that of his dream Lorelei. Antonio stood with one arm stretched along the top of the stone abutment. He cringed, but dared not move it, for he distinctly felt on his the clutch of the uncanny hand which had dragged him from his attic closet up the Rhine to the shadow of the Lorelei, as on the silence over Florence fell the tones of a church clock striking twelve. It was the midnight between Saturday and Sunday. Not a living thing disturbed the street. Nothing was visible but the figure in the window. But something—something was beside him. Antonio could not drag his eyes away from Mina, and he knew that if he looked there would be nothing there. But something held his hand in a tighter and tighter grip as the tones of the clock fell slowly on his ears. Then, soft and low, there came from the window seat the notes of the awful song:

*"Ich weiss nicht was soll es bedeuten  
Dass ich so traurig bin."*

And the end was the same pure trill, of Mina's own. With it Mina left the balustrade, closed the sash and dropped the shade, leaving Antonio alone—alone in the clutch of that uncanny hand in the swirl of the lash of fate.

One might have thought that in his self-esteem he would have counted it a promise that the night clouds in

banks of burnished silver were breaking for the morning—for Mina could not have sung that song if she had not been thinking of him. But he was beyond the reach of consoling philosophy. The hand that was clutching his dragged him away, and without knowing or even wondering why, he went at once to his studio.

Lighting the great sun lamp, he drew the large canvas he had long ago prepared into the glare and set it on an easel. With a crayon he began to sketch. His brain was not working. His eyes were half shut. Dreamily he watched the unintelligible jumble of lines till suddenly they roused him a little and an expression of surprise and fear crept into his semi-conscious face. He glanced quickly at the "Night" on its easel in the corner, then at the empty divan, and nodded and smiled—a curious, empty kind of smile—because it was just what he had seen in his dream. Then his face lapsed again into the lethargy of one half asleep, and his hand worked on.

An effort to explain what one does not understand is folly. Neither did Antonio himself understand, or try to. He only roused himself when he knew that the drawing was finished. He added nothing, changed nothing, as always before—till sometimes, in desperation, he would wipe out everything and begin again, or angrily clutch the hope that color would later on eliminate or absolve the imperfections in his work. He knew it was finished because his hand fell at his side and the crayon dropped upon the floor. He pushed back his stool and scanned the work with an expression of ecstatic satisfaction. It was an expression which had sometimes come into his face when examining a new victory of his father's, but never before in contemplating work of his own. There was the lower foreground, lost in mist foam from unseen water down below. There was the summit of the ledge just emerging above it and seated on the rock the life size figure, nude, enveloped in floating hair. It did not strike him as work of his own for him to

criticize and correct, and after admiring it for a while he put out the light and lay down on the divan. He woke early in the morning and, after a breakfast of wine and biscuit, began at once to paint. He painted all day, with marvelous rapidity, but with the same heavy head and drooping eyes and inattention with which he had sketched the night before. Half the time he seemed to be the boy upon the Rhine, making the sketch to prove to the stranger that with true colors he could do better. There was truth in the fancy, too, for was he not doing the very same, upon the same study, to-day? There were other similarities, and his sluggish brain gave them better thought than the canvas while he worked.

Only through force of habit, as the room grew dark, he ceased painting, washed his brushes, scraped his palette and went home. By his plate at dinner lay a letter from Dr. Scarlatti, asking him kindly, but with a touch of reproof, when he proposed to continue his studies. Beneath the Professor's signature he wrote, "Never," and returned it as his answer; yet, even while writing the word, he resented the conclusion and thoroughly regretted the rudeness to the preceptor who held a position in his heart next to his father. Most of all he regretted that this must be if, as Mina had said, his father was returning within a month. But the reply was not his. He dared not change it, though, for his very life, he would not have disappointed his father in that way.

It was barely sunrise when he was back in the studio again, sitting weak and helpless before the great canvas. Something seemed to have left him while he slept. For an hour his hands were still. His eyes wandered hopelessly about the studio, not over the canvas. It recalled the fatal dream, and again he seemed to be lying on the straw in the attic closet, seeing it all in dream—seeing himself painting. Yes, he was painting. He did not know when he began, but he was painting again, faster and faster, as

though demons were chasing him—so fast that it was laborious following his brush with his eyes, and they drooped again, satisfied to let the work go on as it would and look at it later.

Fortunately the canvas was so large that he could work on many parts, giving each time to dry, for the cold, uncanny clutch was on his hand and he could no more have stopped than he could have begun without it. As his brain crept languidly back in memory while he worked, he realized that more or less distinctly he had always felt that hand leading him, and he seemed to understand that it was all for this—that with the completion of this painting his promised victory would be complete, and that his guide would leave him forever. Only his hands were working. All day his mind was far away from the painting, coming, too late, to many conclusions. But none of them were such as a successfully progressing masterpiece would instigate in the brain of its creator. They were brutally antagonistic to the beautiful thoughts which his brush was realizing on the canvas. But the thoughts of his brain were his, while the thoughts of his brush—

He felt the conviction, as though he read it in handwriting on the wall, that his kingdom was to be taken from him. He looked at the canvas before him and knew that he was building there a sepulcher to have and to hold the triumph of his only ambition, the sum and substance of all that he had ever longed or tried to be—an artist without a peer. And that when the perfect mausoleum was finished and sealed, there would be left of him, outside, only the grinning ghost of all else he might have been. Yet even in those lucid glimpses of himself—of what had been and must be—the solution of his life equation that all things, plus and multiplied, were nothing, compared to the power to paint a perfect picture, was not for an instant shaken. Less than ever in his life did he care for anything but the realization of that one ambition. His dreaming eyes languidly scanned the glowing

dream upon the canvas. His lips parted in a strange smile. Mina had disappeared from the horizon of his thoughts. She was only the Lorelei. The one vague fear which possessed him, like a troubled wave drifting through a dream, was that the power might forsake him one instant before the end. As a drunken man fondles the glass and sips again, lest he lose the effect, Antonio, with every conscious mental effort, yielded himself more and more to the influence which seemed controlling him; the ruling passion grew so strong in death that had he, at that moment, been offered all the glory of perfect manhood, all the kingdoms of the world and Mina's love, to leave the painting unfinished, he would surely have cried out: "No, no! Go on! Go on! Let my morning be perfect!"

So the day's mad hours tore on, and darkness came. He dared not even lay down his palette and brushes, but, holding them in one hand, he lighted every lamp in the studio, arranging them above and behind him, to counteract each other's shadows, and, quivering in every nerve, he painted on all night, and by lamplight, as through the day, the wonderful work on the canvas went steadily on to perfection, though the palest orange, verging into delicate violet predominated in the soft rainbows in the morning mists.

Cold perspiration dripped from his forehead as he stood on the ladder putting the finishing touches on the face of the goddess, just as the real sun rose; and his dull eyes opened wider as they rested on the blue eyes that gleamed and glowed behind the wayward tresses of golden hair scintillating in the morning light. His lips parted before the laughing lips of the "Morning," and his head moved slowly from side to side, as though in time with the tune, as the fingers touched the harp which rested on her knee, waking the cold, gray ledge below with the melody of dawn, as the sun lighted with life the silent shadows, making the rainbows at her feet.

Three weeks and a day he had worked upon the "Night," and he knew that

it was a marvel of rapid execution. Two days and a night he had stood before this new canvas, when the "Morning" dawned in resplendent glory, a matchless masterpiece. Whatever one may put in theory, no one can believe that it was his own unaided work, nor did Antonio for one instant believe it.

As the sunlight flooded the studio his hands fell helpless at his side. The palette and brushes dropped upon the floor. He climbed down from the ladder, trembling, and shoved it away. He knew that the triumph was complete and the work finished. He extinguished the lights and stood before the painting rapt in admiration. But in the warm rays of the spring sun he shivered. An icy chill crept over him, and he forgot the painting in the sudden sense that someone stood beside him. He turned quickly and angrily. Then, "Father!" he cried, and sprang forward. But he staggered back, because his arms found only empty air. And still he saw his father standing there, his eyes fixed on the canvas. "Father!" he cried again.

At last his father spoke. "My Anthony, it is finished," he said. "It is all you would let me do for you. Your brush has conquered. Brushes can never do better. I have kept my promise. Now let the captive go."

"Father!" Antonio cried, clutching for the form that was fading. But, just as on the Rhine, it all grew black, and he fell unconscious—in the shadow of the Lorelei.

It was the conclusion, two days and a night from Boppard on the Rhine. It was the end of two days and a night upon the Arno. So his father came to him and so he went from him, and the beginning and the end were really one—a span of pregnant years between, but the only result the two canvases, with the verdict he had demanded: "Brushes can never do better."

## XV

ANTONIO lay long unconscious on the studio floor, where he might well have been left to die but for one incident,

for he had been so little at home of late that his presence rather than his absence was exceptional. It was days later when the bursting of the bolt on the outer door roused him from the stupor. His valet, his father's banker and a stranger hurried in and carried him to the divan. As they laid him down the banker said to the stranger:

"He has heard it in some way, and it has gone hard with him. I knew it would, for they were more than most to each other."

"Heard what?" Antonio asked, as returning consciousness caught the words.

Without heeding the question, the banker said: "We have sought for you incessantly since this gentleman reached us with the sad news early this morning, but—"

"What news?" Antonio demanded, struggling to rise.

"Tell him again," the stranger whispered. "His mind wanders. It may help to call it back."

The banker was one of his father's warmest friends, and his. He sat down beside him and, laying one hand on his shoulder, said:

"The sad news which this companion of his has brought to us, that at midnight, on Saturday night, Signor Winthrop died suddenly at Cairo, on the Nile."

"Liar!" Antonio gasped, pushing off the hand and staggering to his feet. "He was in this room and talked with me at daylight this morning." Then he fell back on the divan.

"Tell him the incident," the banker said. The stranger knelt by the divan.

"It was so sudden, so unexpected," he began. "Your father was well, and seemed so pleased to be nearing home. He was speaking with us of the ancients of Assouan. He had just been talking of the marvels which they might have accomplished with their art, which was devoted to practical things and to progress, had not the Romans conquered them and forced them to prostitute their infinite prom-

ise to soulless decoration. A clock struck twelve. It was the midnight between Saturday and Sunday. He ceased speaking abruptly, and seemed listening to something. Then, very slowly, he repeated the first lines of a little German poem:

*'Ich weiss nicht was soll es bedeuten  
Dass ich so traurig bin.'*

"He was thinking of you at the very last, for he put his hand to his forehead and added: 'If this be all in all, my Anthony, hurry, hurry, hurry! Do it, and let the captive go.' Those were his last words. A moment later he was dead."

They carried Antonio home, but in spite of doctors and friends he was back again in the studio the next day. Over all the sorrow and suffering, mental and physical, a doubt tormented him, lest all—everything he seemed to remember—might be alike a dream. It was an unspeakable relief to find the "Morning" finished, standing on the easel.

Only then could he think clearly of anything, for still that triumph meant more to him than all the rest. He sat down in the shadow of the Lorelei and recalled his father's last words about the Egyptian stone cutters. He knew they were meant for him—a last message; he had prostituted his infinite possibilities to one single, soulless ambition, to secure the verdict for which he insatiably longed, that no brush could ever do better than his had done.

He smiled as he remembered that he had succeeded, but he did not look up at the painting. The conclusions which came to him during that last night swept over him again, and he felt once more the premonition that the dirge of victory was wreck upon the rocks below, and not the silvery trill of Mina's own, which always before had come as the conclusion of the Lorelei. He saw it in a different light, as he sat there—the verdict that he could not do better. It appeared to him, too late, as life's grand catastrophe—the awful fact that he had accomplished the best that was in him; that he could never do better. And

yet, when it came to the last analysis, it *was* a perfect painting; and even then he would not have sacrificed one little corner of it to have reversed anything which was. He sprang to his feet.

"I'm an idiot, a fool," he cried, "to sit here cringing still before the hallucinations of my distorted brain! Who says the power to paint another perfect picture has gone from me? Have I worked and studied all the years to end a plaything for psychic phenomena? It is ridiculous!"

He picked up the palette, which had fallen on the floor when the painting was finished, and examined it curiously for a moment, touching the dry mounds of color with his finger. Then a startled look swept over his face. He glanced up at the painting. The palette fell again to the floor. Trembling, he dragged the "Night" on its easel from the shadows and set the companion pieces side by side. He staggered back a pace or two, and with hands hanging helpless at his side, with livid face and wild, staring eyes, stood looking at the crowning triumph of his life. A moment later he ran to his case of color tubes, tore off the cap from one tube after another and daubed their contents upon the polished surface of his desk. They were "true colors," his pride and his glory, but, the grinning ghost which he had seen himself, he clutched the desk and bent over them, unable to tell one from another. One word, with a bitter groan, escaped his parched lips:

"Color-blind!"

Maybe it is more remarkable that the harp of a thousand strings had kept in tune so long. Maybe it is easily explicable that physical exhaustion, the strain upon his eyes and nerves through that last night, the fall, the shock of his father's death, naturally induced the result; but he did not philosophize. He only realized. He thought the burden was greater than he could bear. He was mistaken, for the mills that grind so slowly had only just begun. They held his grist of mangled grain between the relentless

ridges of the upper and the nether stones—one what he was, whirling and mutilating; the other what he might be, stationary, in the grip of the inexorable. There was one exit, but he did not give a single thought nor a random wish to the possibility of finding it. He thought that the burden was greater than he could bear, and, staggering from the studio, he locked the door behind him and threw the key into a waste barrel, waiting for the sanitary cart to carry off its contents to be dumped into the Arno below the city. Offsprings fraught with possibility he had murdered in their swaddling clothes. He had thrown his pearls to swine, and they had turned to rend him. He understood that perfectly, but, unused to making the best of anything but his art, he followed the instincts of his life in leaving the past behind him when he had no further use for it. The door was locked; the key was lost. Deserted in their dungeon, "Night" and "Morning" stood side by side, the soul and substance of the artist's squandered day.

Too wretched to be conscious of anything, he wandered about Florence till late at night he found himself crossing the Bridge of the Seasons over the Arno.

He was alone. He looked down into the angry river, swollen from the spring rains, and wondered. He reached over the parapet and, stretching out his arms, he said: "Oh, Death, where is thy sting, to one who runs to thee? Oh, for oblivion! Down in that swirling pool I'll grasp thy bony hand and laugh into thy hollow eyes. It's only life that frightens me."

A low cry startled him. He had thought himself alone. Turning suddenly, against the sky he saw a faintly outlined figure sway on the opposite balustrade; then it disappeared. Listening with almost supernatural keenness, he heard another faint cry and the splash, above the gurgling of the river, as the body plunged into the water. He did not cross the bridge, for instantly he realized—he had been planning it all for himself—that some-



one braver than he had made what he was mustering courage to make, but had also made a mistake in leaping from the up river side. He heard steps and shouts from others who had seen, and were running to the spot, but he did not stop to look. Instantly he threw off his cloak and hat, and, vaulting the balustrade, shot downward.

It was not an effort to follow the example he would have set. It was the man in him which for the tragic moment overcame the thing he would be. His eyes were strained open as he fell to note the eddies shimmering in the faint light and the sinister glint of the whirlpool beyond the arch, knowing that there, for an instant, the body would be thrown to the surface. As he sank into the whirlpool he saw a white hand swing in the subtle swirl and clutched it. He sank deeper, dragging the hand after him, then rose with it and, grasping the body firmly with one arm, he made a mad fight against the furious Arno, while a crowd gathered along the street abutment and cheered him on and finally dragged him out, with the unconscious body, which was laid upon the pavement.

Dazed and gasping, he bent, dripping, over it for an instant, wondering if he had succeeded in outwitting the unhappy prisoner who would have burst the bonds of life. He saw that it was a woman. Someone kneeling beside her pushed back the masses of wet hair that covered her face.

With a groan, Antonio fell upon his knees on the other side, and bending forward gasped, "Leonora!"

The hand that had brushed away the hair pushed him back, and a voice said: "Put her in my carriage, instantly."

He looked across the lifeless breast, and choking, stretched his dripping, trembling hands toward Mina, whose carriage had been stopped, returning from the Opera. The crowd eagerly obeyed, and lifted the body, and Mina followed it to her carriage.

Someone handed Antonio his hat and cloak. He remembered putting them on; but from that moment life

was an utter blank to him till, two years later, when, with no more surprise than is expressed in curiosity, he little by little realized that he was not what those about him thought, but that under an assumed name he was living a strange existence in Paris.

It was not a sudden nor a complete revelation. It was like the dim, dual consciousness of gradual awakening from a dream and, half awake, yet half asleep, both living and dreaming. He had no idea how he came there nor any desire to know. He remembered very little of the past, beyond a deep, dull pain and a dread of waking further lest it torture him more. It was such a strange, new life to him that it amused him, especially to see how adept he had become, without knowing it, in the wildest revelries of that fountain head of the perfidy of life and perjury of death—from the melodious call of the Bourdon bell, in the gray tower of Notre Dame, to the clang of voluptuous revelry in the gilded glitter of the Jardin Mabille.

## XVI

IN half-waking consciousness Antonio watched himself, amused at first at his precociousness in sin, at his popularity in such resorts as he could scarcely credit, even when he saw—and fancied, still, that it must be some delirious dream. No depravity seemed abhorrent, no mockery of morality too degenerate. It was almost as he had watched his brush painting the "Morning" that he watched himself in the tinsel glitter of this Parisian hell.

He realized only that it was flight from some awful suffering that tortured him, and not fondness for debauchery, driving, not coaxing him, into the glare of the infernal Elysium.

When the novelty wore off he became loathsome and repulsive to himself, and began to dread the horrible nightmare more than any reality which could be if he could rouse himself. But one day his eye caught an announcement that the great prima donna,

Wilhelmina von Steinberg, was shortly to appear in a special performance at the Opéra Comique.

Then the details of life came back to him. He knew who he was and why he was seeking balm in this Gilead of horror; he was searching hell for a caustic which could burn from him the memory of Mina, groping for a glare which could obliterate the shadow of the Lorelei. The loathing of everything remained, but, in sympathy for himself, as the rabid dog in his agony of thirst turns again and again to the waterpool, though it drive him to convulsions, he drank deeper than ever at the bitter fountain to quench the fire that was consuming him.

He found that in the blank space of life he had framed an ingenious plan to recoup his finances. He was making drafts on his father's bankers, signed by Anthony Winthrop, payable to the new name. He found himself already well known by the broker, who readily cashed his drafts, but one day the broker warned him that he could not accept another, as he had been notified from Florence that the account was nearly exhausted. Antonio thanked him and walked away, conscious only of a kind of grim exultation that in the two years of unconsciousness of his reality and a few months of that dual existence he had squandered the entire fortune which his father left, trying to blot out that phantom of Mina looking at him across the lifeless breast of Leonora.

For a little longer, with unrestrained prodigality, he quaffed the sparkling soul of sunny France from cut glass wine cups. Then, by the aid of the pawnshops, he gulped the fiery draught in fetid byways. It did not signify if either only brought forgetfulness. But he was tired of it, very tired, and a sense of satisfaction stole over him, with the feeling that at last the mad race was almost run. He thought of the Seine and the morgue and of what follows it as only of the next incident, and tried the harder to drown in fiery draughts the dread that afterward there might be some estate where the

phantom would still follow him, without the helping hand of the distracting pandemonium of Paris.

It came at last—the time for finding out and solving life's mystery. It was his last morning. Everything was exhausted. He sat in a vile restaurant, sipping miserable coffee. A page from a Paris newspaper, smeared from long service, rustled in his palsied hands. It was only the lingering microbes of refinement skulking still in his benumbed inclinations—bacteria which had escaped the toxins of Paris—which caused him to hold a newspaper while sitting over his morning coffee. He had nothing more to do with the world. He was not reading of its vagaries. Only by force of old habit, noticing that the scrap contained the art column, he glanced a second time.

By one of those unaccountable, exoteric agencies, the fragment of an old newspaper which lay within his reach that morning not only contained the art column, which of old had been of daily interest to him, but began that column in bold letters:

“‘Night’ and ‘Morning’—the two Greatest Productions of the Century—Now on Public Exhibition in Paris.”

Antonio rested his hands on the table to steady the paper and sat staring at the headlines. Then the paper fell again to the table and he sipped his cold coffee. He did not care to read. He had nothing more to do with art. But nearly the entire column was devoted to the article, and after a while his eyes rested again on the lines. Slowly and half aloud he read:

“For two years earnest efforts have been made to secure permission to place these masterpieces on exhibition. They are the last and greatest works of the world-renowned artist, Anthony Winthrop, whose first sketch in the Salon, called ‘Beatrice,’ placed him at once among the greatest artists of the day, and whose progress since then has been unprecedented.

“‘Night’ and ‘Morning’ are life size companion pieces, completed just before the sudden death of the artist's father, the great Charles Winthrop, the first of living portrait painters, and but a few days prior to the artist's heroic rescue of the young woman who attempted suicide in the Arno. Possibly he did not consider that it was finished,

for he has not affixed his signature to the 'Morning,' which he finished last. But the combination of tragic events unbalanced the artist's mind, and he has never since been inside his studio.

"It is only because the artist's resources have become exhausted that his friends, who have jealously guarded these treasures left in his studio, have at last consented to exhibit them for his benefit."

The words went on, but Antonio turned away in disgust, for the better company of his insipid coffee. Only in languid retrospection the paragraphs which he had read drifted slowly through his brain, bringing a faint sense of satisfaction with the thought that Leonora was not really dead when he looked across her breast into the eyes he loved.

"It was a farfetched right for fate to kill her just to carry out my curse," he muttered. Then he smiled at the thought of the bankers trying to prepare for future drafts. He smiled because he knew how unnecessary it was. He had no intention of drawing again on them. His fingers clenched and his fist fell on the newspaper as he added: "Do they think that I would live upon the life blood of the soul which I poured out upon that canvas?"

Fumbling in his pocket, he drew out a silver franc and a two-sou piece. He looked at them and laughed. "You are the last," he said—"the copper for the coffee that's gone; the silver for three absinthes, when the sun goes down, for strength to get into the Seine."

His eyes fell on the last line of the article, and he read aloud: "Admission to the gallery, one franc." He laughed again. "I meant this franc for admission to the morgue," he said. "I wonder if they would admit me to that gallery if I paid the price with it—me?"

He read the headlines once more and again looked at the franc, deliberating.

"What are those paintings to me?" he asked, and after a moment he answered himself: "They are so much to me that, should my father stand here now and offer to place me again at the

best I have known of life if I would throw a handful of dust at them, I should cry: 'God forbid! I will not do it!'"

Antonio rose unsteadily and looked at himself in the smeared mirror, which, fair or foul, is inherent to the Paris restaurant. He saw a bloated face and bloodshot eyes leering and laughing back at him. He wondered again if they would admit such a thing to a private gallery, but the sight only strengthened his desire to look once more at the only good thing which came from his Nazareth.

The hall was large, and it was early when he arrived, but the entrance, at least, was already crowded. The door-keeper frowned as he approached, but he held the franc well in sight and dropped it quickly in the box. People shrank away from him as he passed on, so that he stood alone. There were great artists, anxious to gather hints from the century's master, but not at the cost of coming too near to that vagabond. There were millionaires, counting with themselves the amount they would pay to possess those triumphs, who forgot their calculations to shudder and shrink away from the foul stranger. There were social queens eager to boast that they had kneeled before the famous masterpieces, who cringed and hurried farther away when they came near enough to see the miserable unknown. Little children cast frightened glances toward him—children who had been brought there that in later years they might have the satisfaction of knowing that once they had seen the greatest productions of the greatest artist of the century. But, better and longer than they remembered the paintings, those little ones remembered—him!

Then the manager, moving, pleased, among the throng pressing forward to the curtained end of the hall, saw, and gulped an oath, as his eyes rested on the ragged wretch. He wrapped his hand in his handkerchief before he caught the intruder by the shoulder and pushed him into a dark alcove, so that those who were more worthy might

feast their eyes without the defiling presence of that bloated face.

What did it signify? Antonio was not so anxious as he thought to see those paintings. There was no disappointment. Only, because he had nowhere to go if he went away, he sat all day on a narrow ledge, hidden by the drapery which curtained off the alcove, waiting for night and the Seine and the morgue and vaguely wondering what would follow it.

Late in the afternoon a conversation, close outside the draperies, roused his benumbed senses. It was the manager and one of the wealthy bankers of Paris. They came there for seclusion. The banker said:

"True, they are the finest figure pieces produced in many a generation. But the world is growing too sensible to lavish fortunes on simple decoration. In a year you will not find a purchaser who will meet my offer, which is one hundred thousand francs in cash, to close the exhibition tonight and deliver the paintings to me tomorrow."

A hundred thousand francs for the labor of three weeks, three days and one night! The blood rushed to Antonio's head. His throat contracted. He could hardly breathe. It did not signify to him, but in the delirium of his muddled brain he wished that Mina could know. His thoughts flew back. He was drawing the picture on the wall again—when other steps approached. He sat with his elbows on his knees, holding his bloated face in his shaking hands. He did not care to hear more, but the speakers were near. The newcomer said:

"If monsieur will pardon a moment's interruption—he need not retire; our business is not private; only, the lady and myself are in haste. We must be off, but we want to speak concerning purchasing the paintings."

"Certainly, monsieur," said the manager. "And, since you permit it, I will ask the gentleman to remain. It is only just, for at this moment we were talking upon the same subject."

The new man spoke slowly, with the deliberate precision of one accustomed

to confining himself to facts. He spoke with a German accent. "It is so much the better," he said. "You have come to some conclusion as to price? I am prepared to purchase the pictures at once. What are the figures?"

"Indeed, monsieur," replied the obsequious manager, "that is further than I have thought. This gentleman was simply making me an offer. This, you know, is the first time that the pictures have ever been on exhibition. They have never been on sale. They have been placed in my hands as a sacred trust, to realize on them as much and as speedily as possible. To do this effectively, it was my thought to hold this exhibition, as the sale of such wonderful works would probably, I feared, require more time. But this gentleman, monsieur, has made me an offer at his own volition to close the exhibition and deliver the paintings at once. I confess that exhibiting the paintings seems to promise profitably. I have been dreaming, through these first days of remarkable success, that I might go on with exhibitions all over Europe and Great Britain, and—"

"I understand you to mean that you wish a random offer from me, at my own volition," the new man interrupted, with a tinge of German scorn in his voice. "As I said, we are in haste; therefore I will make it at once. I will pay you two hundred and fifty thousand francs for the paintings at the close of this exhibition."

"Three hundred thousand for them tonight!" said the banker.

There was a smile in the other's voice as he said: "Ah, I thank you. Now I know where we stand. I will change my offer. I will pay you five hundred thousand francs for the paintings, and you shall retain the right to exhibit them for one year."

"Six hundred thousand francs for them, *now!*" exclaimed the banker.

"Seven hundred and fifty thousand," said the new man slowly.

Poor Antonio, crouching behind the curtain, in the halcyon day of his wildest dream—the Elysium of his one ambition.

"Gentlemen," said the manager in the silence which followed, "you realize, as do I, that the paintings have a value which is practically unlimited. Even as you speak these enormous sums, my mind is still bidding against you. I am saying to myself that in the twenty great cities of Europe I can exhibit them for at least five years at a good income and—"

"I will give you eight hundred thousand francs for those paintings tonight!" the banker interrupted savagely.

"Pardon me, monsieur," the manager continued, "but I am wondering whether, at the end of those five years, I might not have them copied, in various prints—which I know would ruin their value for private purchasers—but, while deriving, perhaps, almost as much again for the great artist whom I am most proud to represent, I might not, in the end, retain the originals and put them back where he left them, in his own studio. I do not know, gentlemen; I am only trying to—"

"A curse on the thought that would deprave with copies and vulgarize in exhibitions two such masterpieces!" the banker retorted. "I will give you eight hundred and fifty thousand francs, your money down tonight, without waiting for years of doubtful business and the eternal shame of damning those great works, under the specious plea that you are honoring Anthony Winthrop. If he were here, my God, how he would denounce you! Bah!"

"Monsieur," said the other in the tone of one who was bored, "I do not quite agree with the reasoning of either of you. I will change my offer to coincide with my own convictions. I will hand you, sir, tonight, a guaranteed cheque for one million five hundred thousand francs. You shall retain the right to exhibit the paintings for five years, and during that time to have made such copies as you choose, provided that the exhibitions and the copies are strictly for the benefit of the artist, and provided that competent judges shall pronounce the copies

worthy of the originals in their various spheres. I think you will receive no bid against me. We are in haste."

Before the curtain there was silence. Behind it one heart was beating a mad reveille, and one last hope, on the verge of the Seine and the morgue and what might follow it, cried to heaven that Mina might know.

Whispering it that his ears might hear again and help him to believe, Anthony repeated to himself softly: "A million five hundred thousand francs, and all those rights, for the work of three weeks, three days and—" He paused; he shuddered. He pressed his hands against his swollen, burning cheeks. "No, no!" he whispered. "It is the sum and total value of my life, and the sole result of all my father's love and all he sacrificed, up for the highest bidder in an auction room. It is the market value, in cold coin, of all that I offered Mina for her love. God grant that she may never know."

Antonio heard retreating footsteps. The banker had left, then. The other asked quietly: "Are they mine?"

The manager's voice was no longer professionally calm. "One is always most careful in the disposition of high-priced works of art," he said. "Pardon me, monsieur, but—"

"You question my ability to meet the obligation?" the other interrupted.

"Do not think it, monsieur!" the manager exclaimed. "Who raises an offer six hundred and fifty thousand francs at a single bid has resources that are like Cæsar's wife. But your concessions practically destroy the commercial value of what you purchase for fifteen hundred thousand francs. I do not—"

"We are not dealers in art, nor reliable connoisseurs," the other interrupted again. "He who was bidding against me was a better judge of commercial values, and his being here guarantees you that the paintings have been properly appraised. As I stated, we came prepared to purchase the paintings. We had no desire to undervalue them, and copying and exhibiting will not harm them, in our esteem."



"Even more you perplex me," said the manager. "It is the largest sum ever offered for the work of a living artist. But, monsieur, I would beg my bread before I would be disloyal to Anthony Winthrop. Through father and son we Florentines worship that name. To the pure all things are pure, but there is always evil to him who evil thinks. If through my greed or carelessness these paintings should find their way into the Jardin Mabille, for example, for which I can conceive that copying and exhibiting might even be good advertising, they would be turned over to the handmaid of hell. And I would burn my hand off, as did Esteros, before I would allow even the name of Anthony Winthrop to be mentioned there."

Anthony Winthrop—the shivering creature hiding in the alcove, who, months before had been kicked out of the Jardin Mabille, as unworthy any longer to participate in its revelries!

"What is it, then, that you require?" asked the other.

"Simply the usual contract, monsieur," said the manager, "the usual contract covering the sale of high-priced works of living artists. A satisfactory pledge, signed by the purchaser in person, as to the proposed disposition of the paintings, and a lien upon them in favor of the artist securing an agreement that they may be reclaimed for seventy-five per cent of the purchase price if, within the life of the artist, the contract is ignored or his professional integrity jeopardized."

"I will sign such a contract," replied the other.

"Are you purchasing them for yourself, monsieur?"

"I am not."

"The purchaser must sign it in person."

"There are reasons why the name of the owner must not be known while the paintings are on exhibition," the other replied. "If it must be a part of the contract, it must be absolutely confidential."

"Monsieur, believe me, I would not part with the paintings at any price

without guarding to the utmost the honor and integrity of Anthony Winthrop. But I give you my oath that the name shall remain unknown."

"Very well," said the other with a sigh of relief that the terms were at last settled. "I am business manager for this lady. She is the purchaser—Mademoiselle Wilhelmina von Steinberg."

Clutching his throat with a groan, Antonio staggered to his feet and appeared before them.

"Vagabond!" the manager ejaculated, catching him by the arm without waiting for an intervening handkerchief. He dragged him quickly to a rear entrance and kicked him out.

Pausing only a moment, while he brushed the contaminating dust from his hand and clothes and watched the man lying where he had fallen on the pavement of the foul alley, he said: "Damn you, lie there and die!" and hurried back to complete the transfer of his sacred trust and receive a million five hundred thousand francs for the wonderful work of Anthony Winthrop's brush.

The Seine was robbed, for the police gathered up an unconscious wreck from the back alley and, because a spark of life remained, they carried it to the pauper hospital for medical experiments.

The hospital history of the case pronounces the experiments a success. At all events, some months later a white-haired man of twenty-nine left its shelter, leaving all the past behind him, as was his natural instinct, when it was done; but from that long season of retrospect he emerged with different views of life and the determination to walk, so far as he could walk at all, in the other ways which his father had opened for him. He laid deliberate plans. He had written to his father's bankers to sell all his remaining effects and settle all obligations; to turn over at once to Wilhelmina von Steinberg the two paintings, together with the price she had paid for them and the contract she had signed, with the statement that the work was originally done

for her at the suggestion of his father. He added the request that, when whatever might remain to him had been forwarded, he be finally and forever forgotten, as he had too thoroughly disgraced his profession and his father's name ever again to come within touch of his old associations.

The remittance was much larger than he had imagined possible. His acknowledgment of it was the last act and signature of "Anthony Winthrop," whose hand had held the brush for some unsolvable mystery to paint "The Lorelei." Fifteen years before, no such person existed. No such person existed after that moment. And by the will of a kind Nemesis the paintings themselves were before long obliterated. In the great conflagration, during the bombardment of the city where they were stored, they were utterly destroyed. Only the "Morning" had been copied for reproduction at the time the paintings were ordered delivered to the purchaser—copied, like the painting, without signature—and the two or three plates which had been made but never used were lost and utterly forgotten in those troubled times. Long afterward they came to a German junk collector, who knew enough of art to save them, and enough of his folklore to recognize the legendary Lorelei and rechristen them.

## XVII

DR. DORNER threw his head back upon the sofa cushions, his wonderful eyes fixed upon—dear heaven! I had forgotten that he was blind! Light from the heights touched his dark, strong face. His lips parted; he smiled and sighed.

"The tale is told," he said. "The shadow of the Lorelei is no more." A moment later he added: "If it saves you from falling under the spell, I am satisfied to have you know."

"The shadow is no more, Dr. Dorner," I replied. "But the sunshine? Has not the morning dawned? Has there not been blessedness and light

from the Lorelei since then? Will you not tell me of that?"

"There is little to tell, and it is so personal and irrelevant that it seems almost unseemly," he said. "I went immediately to America, where I became a teacher, then tutor, then professor in one of the large universities, devoting my time to the remarkable knowledge of languages, which was among the unappreciated good things I received from my father. The injury in Florence and the added insult in Paris reached the climax of retributive justice when I woke one morning to find myself totally blind. It was a gentle punishment. It might have been much worse. I temporarily abandoned work, but was restless. I longed to be doing still, for others more worthy, what my father would have done for me, and finding that I was not wholly dependent upon my eyes, I began in a small way a school of languages in my home—in the morning free for the poor; in the afternoon for the wives and daughters of my neighbors; in the evening for men and boys. Very soon I required an assistant, and after some trouble and changes I secured a lady quite as well versed as I. Her voice was full of melody, and attracted me instantly. I felt—and fought it strenuously—a constant longing to have her near; to lean on her, mentally, spiritually. I liked, too well, to sit and talk with her during the twilight hour, when the rooms were deserted. My soul seemed to open itself to her in spite of every effort I could make. She never seemed to urge me; yet in time I realized that voluntarily, little by little, I had told her my whole history. She was more of a philosopher than I, and one day, commenting upon my statement that I had made some progress toward a higher life because I was able to accept my blindness more as a reward than as a punishment, she said:

"Did it never occur to you, Professor, that the two are always one? Outside of the farce of courts, there is no such thing as punishment. A hell is ridiculously inconsistent with every-

thing but man's absurd ideas of what the result of breaking laws ought to be. Nature has nothing but reward, the necessary effect of a preceding cause. The effect falls where it must, in bane or blessing, irrespective of the author of the cause. How do you know the divine estimate of every act, to be sure that it deserved punishment?"

"There is an inner consciousness," I said.

"Is it not possible that Mina may look from some such viewpoint, too?" she replied.

"When I have been so miserably human, could I expect of Mina that she should be divine?" I asked.

"But, Professor," she said, "your position and hers are so different; and true love is an eternal apologist. You see how your imperfect love for her failed utterly. Perhaps she sees how her imperfect love for you failed, too, of what she might have accomplished with it; and she may regret her part as much as you do yours. She may be believing, even now, that your forgiveness of her would be so much more than human that she cannot think it possible. Do not interrupt me, Professor—only listen. I am speaking from my heart. She must remember, too, that night by the Arno. Has she not, probably, heard the whole sad truth from Leonora? It may be that long ago they both forgave all that they had to forgive, and that the night by the river is a phantom in their lives still, as bitter as it was in yours, because they see themselves as left by it beyond the pale of your forgiveness. Your gift of those paintings to her ought to have opened her eyes to the reality in you, just as her purchase of them showed you the reality in her. Why did she leave the stage at the very pinnacle of her success? Why did she go upon the stage at all, but to prove her ability to sing a perfect song for you, as you worked in the studio to paint for her a perfect picture? It was what you required of her as much as what she required of you. Did you appreciate her effort more than she

yours? You went about your labors of love in such different ways that, when at last you met, you could neither of you understand the other's love. Maybe she understands it better now, just as you understand it better. Even for your father's generosity she is indebted to your love. Perhaps she bitterly regrets that, in supercilious prudishness, she repudiated you, instead of the superficial things in you which she understood and disapproved. And truly, Professor, I believe that she has the better cause for it. I believe that she drove you deeper into a mire from which it lay in the power of her abundant love to have extricated you. It was pride, the sin of sins, in both of you, Professor. Now you have lost yours. May she not have lost hers? I myself believe that that was why she left the stage; that, unhampered, she could search the world for you—for a chance to tell you of the awful aching in her heart; and that above the brightest glare of victories there shone but one light, one hope—the one longing, yesterday, today and forever—your forgiveness and your love."

"She did not let me reply, but as she ceased speaking I heard the rustle of her dress and knew that she had gone to an open window. Then softly—so softly at first that I thought I only fancied it—there stole back to me the strains of that dear song:

*'Ich weiss nicht was soll es bedeuten,  
Dass ich so traurig bin.'*

"Hardly realizing what I was doing, I walked slowly toward the window. I was close beside her, but I cringed as she neared the end, thinking suddenly that however sweetly she was singing, it was nothing, after all, without Mina's trill—and then—

*"That trill!"*

"Mina!" I cried, springing forward. And for one heavenly instant my blind eyes saw again. I looked into the blue eyes I loved. The sight was lost again, but Mina's arms were about my neck, and in the monstrous magnanimity of woman's love she was saying: 'Forgive me and love me, Carlo, for I love only you.'

"It was Leonora who helped her search for me. It was Leonora who discovered my hiding place and brought Mina to it. Hers is the heroic glory of our tragedy. She is wearing the sacred convent veil and praying daily for our peace and happiness. Hers is the great victory. Hers is the perfect day. We came slowly through the

mists, and some of the clouds must always follow us. Leonora is our *pax vobiscum*, our benediction. Heaven bless her!"

Dr. Dorner rose quickly from the divan.

"Come," he said. "Mina has returned; I hear her step. Come, we will ask her to sing 'The Lorelei.'"



## THE BREATH OF WINTER

By LURANA W. SHELDON

OVER the meadows and valleys and plains,  
 Over the forest and sea,  
 Over the ridge of the mountainous chains,  
 Sweeping the windward and lea,  
 Lo, in the night time a spirit went out,  
 Journeying over the land,  
 Putting the summer completely to rout  
 All by the wave of a hand.

Now on the hilltops the foliage is sere,  
 Blended in russet and gold;  
 Gray are the skies and forbidding and drear,  
 Dull are the waters and cold.  
 Hushed is the voice of the murmuring stream,  
 Absent the bird from the bough,  
 Silent the shadows that linger to dream  
 Under the bowlder's rude brow.

High on the peaks rests a glittering white,  
 White in the hollow below;  
 Chill is the wind in its turbulent flight,  
 Chill with its burden of snow.  
 Over the land in the mischievous dark  
 Wandered the spirit at will—  
 Leaving the meadow all staring and stark,  
 Leaving despair on the hill.



MANY a term of endearment is spoken in jest.

# THE PRIME ESSENTIAL

By PAUL M. ROSENWEY

"**I**T all depends," said young Gwillam, flushing slightly at his audacity in differing with his Petronius, "it all depends upon how much he cares. If he likes her well enough, a man can easily forgive a woman anything."

Drysdale smiled slightly and settled himself more comfortably in his chair. "My dear boy," he remarked, "there are some things that no man can forgive a woman and at the same time retain his self-respect."

"But that is only another way of saying that he does not care enough," protested Gwillam. "If he did, he would not let a mere matter of pride stand in the way of his happiness."

"It is not a matter of pride," said Drysdale gravely, "but of self-respect, which is something very different. A man can do without a great many things which he ordinarily thinks are necessary to his existence—comfort, wealth, love, even happiness, but very few men can do without respect for themselves. You may think you know men who have done so, but that is only because you do not realize how clever some men may become in deluding themselves. And the stronger, the better the man, the harder it is for him so to delude himself. He must recognize the truth, which, in the case we have in mind, is that the woman he loves denies his chief right to existence. She declares that in his primary function of a mate he has been found wanting. It is the deadliness of this insult, striking far deeper into a man's being than any feeling of pride, of love or of honor, which makes it not difficult, but impossible for him really to forgive

the wrong done him in such a case. Did you know Brioché?"

Gwillam nodded. "Perhaps it was more of a case of knowing *of* him. He was a little before my time."

"And his wife?"

Gwillam nodded again.

"Perhaps my telling you, then, is indiscreet, but if discretion is the soul of valor, indiscretion is as certainly the soul of conversation; so prepare to hear a moral little tale. Brioché, you know, was a very decent sort of fellow, big in every way, morally and physically, honest, simple-minded and generous—one of those men whom all other men like, but whom most women fail entirely to appreciate. Still, even his wife liked Brioché; the difficulty was that she only liked him, and— But I anticipate. He had some money, a considerable amount, really, which he had inherited from his father. I doubt whether he could have made a fortune for himself, but he had a careful, plodding, thoroughgoing nature, which was admirably adapted for the care of what he had. As I said before, his wife liked him, and I have no doubt that she expected their marriage to be quite satisfactorily happy. You see, he loved her, and she liked him; he was rich and she had been poor: all excellent foundations upon which to raise the structure of marital happiness.

"But Mrs. Brioché had an insufficient knowledge of her own character, or perhaps she did not take its peculiarities sufficiently into consideration. At any rate, after they had been married a year or more she began to be conscious of what I believe is known as a 'void' in her life. She was unable



to define its exact nature at first; she knew only that she suffered a continual vague unhappiness. The truth was that she was very modern, and, among other modern attributes, she had the diseased nerves which render it impossible to be satisfied with a quiet, normal existence. Just as the gourmand demands highly spiced food and the drunkard the fiery solace of strong liquor, so she craved excitement. She found partial relief in reading erotic poetry and symbolist literature. She became quite an authority on the ultra-modern French school, and soon gathered about her a number of followers, ladies who also suffered from voids, and a few stout and unwholesome-looking young men who seemed to have no other occupation in life than the filling of voids.

"I need not tell you, I suppose, how Brioché looked upon the things with which his wife amused herself. He made honest and conscientious efforts to listen with attention when she attempted to interest him, but he had much the same unpleasant sense of discomfort that he would have felt while wearing soiled clothing or sitting in an unventilated room—a sense of something unclean. His feeling was so obvious that his wife soon abandoned what she described to her friends as her 'missionary work,' but as soon as this became necessary, she was able to understand quite clearly why she had been so unhappy. She was not understood! She was not appreciated!

"She was quite sincere. Had she been told the truth about herself, she would have been genuinely shocked. She would even have been troubled in mind for a time. Then, perhaps, she would have confided in one of her friends; the friend would have murmured 'Philistine,' and she would have been consoled. 'Philistine' is a very useful word. Yes, she was yoked to a man who was entirely unable to follow her into those realms of higher thought in which only she felt at home. Her plight was sad!

"Well, of course, when one is misunderstood and unappreciated by those

near one, it is only natural to seek for understanding and appreciation from others, or perhaps I should say from another; and Mrs. Brioché was no different from the rest of us in that respect. She found the person she was seeking when Brioché's cousin came home. The cousin was, of course, a man. When one is misunderstood and unappreciated, the slightest masculine sympathy seems of so much more value than that of a dozen feminine friends. The cousin—Harnish was his name—was very sympathetic. Understanding and sympathy were his specialties. He knew all about culture and the higher thought. He had been studying art in Paris—at Brioché's expense, by the way—for several years, and Huysmans, Baudelaire and Mallarmé were his prophets. He was fat and pasty, took no exercise, and wore a scanty Van Dyke beard and eyeglasses with rims of tortoise shell. Need I say more?

"But Brioché had known him when they were boys, before Harnish had developed those little peculiarities which made so many decent men feel like kicking him; and Brioché, viewing him through the memory of those days, could not see him as we did. He was often at Brioché's house. Mrs. Brioché found him very congenial. He never looked bored when they discussed the morals of the superman, nor was he shocked when they discussed the lack of morals of the superwoman. No, he was broad, very broad; so broad, indeed, that presently he had no scruples about wronging Brioché, the man to whom he owed his living for years, in the worst way one man can wrong another.

"After a time the affair—perhaps I should say a more or less definite suspicion that there might be an affair—leaked into the public consciousness. Brioché's course of conduct was awaited with much interest. They say that in such matters the husband is always the last person to know, but it seemed as if Brioché were about to go one better and never to know. A year passed and matters remained just as before.

The lapse of time was beginning even to envelope the situation in a fictitious atmosphere of legitimacy, when Mrs. Brioché grew strangely cold to the apostle of higher thought. Whether her conscience aroused itself to action somewhat late in the day, or whether she began to understand the sort of man her husband really was, or whether, as is most likely, she had grown tired of Harnish, as it was her fate after a time to grow tired of all men and all things, I do not know; but, at any rate, Harnish was very plainly given his dismissal, and I was mentally congratulating my friend Brioché—when the accident happened.

"Late one afternoon, as she was driving home, a runaway team ran into Mrs. Brioché's carriage, overturned it, threw her into the street and passed over her. They carried her into her house a few feet away, and when Brioché arrived in answer to a hasty summons, he was told that she was dying. An hour later they permitted him to see her, probably believing that the worst could not be made worse.

"She was conscious when he entered the room, but she did not speak, nor did he. He stood beside the bed and looked down upon her in silence, his face torn with grief. Then suddenly he threw himself on his knees and hid his face in the bedclothes to stifle the sobs that burst from him. Presently he felt the gentle pressure of his wife's hand upon his head, and he looked up.

"Send them away," she whispered.

"He dismissed the two nurses and returned to her side. And as he knelt there, his eyes fastened hungrily upon her face, awaiting her last words, the last words of the woman he loved, she told him—most of what I have told you.

"You see, she was consistent to the end. She probably believed that she was performing a painful duty in thus leaving him a legacy of shame and sor-

row. To most persons it would have seemed her duty to preserve silence and not to purchase peace of mind for herself at the expense of the man she had already so grossly injured.

"When she had finished, he rose and walked across the room. He stood for a long time with his back turned, looking into the street, before he returned. She looked at him beseechingly from her great, pain-darkened eyes.

"Can you forgive me?" she whispered.

"She was the woman he loved, and she was dying. He could remember nothing else.

"He said nothing, but knelt once more beside the bed and, seizing her hand, covered it with kisses. Again he felt her trembling touch upon his hair. He looked up, and in her eyes he saw a look that had never been there before—for him.

"I knew you were good," she whispered hoarsely, 'but I never knew how good. I never thought a man could be so good.'"

Drysdale was silent. He took out his cigar case, carefully selected a cigar and leisurely lighted it. Young Gwillam watched him expectantly a moment, then burst into speech.

"But that was beautiful!" he cried, his eyes shining. "Beautiful! And it proves what I said. He was a great man, and he loved her enough to forgive her anything."

Drysdale smiled slightly.

"Softly, softly, my young friend," he protested gently. "You said you knew them, and I thought you might have heard the end. I see you have not. You see, Mrs. Brioché did not die after all. On the contrary, she became quite well again."

"Yes?" said young Gwillam eagerly.

"And about a month after she was perfectly cured Brioché began his action for a divorce."



# THE WORSHIPERS

By MILDRED McNEAL SWEENEY

WHEN I am but a spirit and a voice  
Singing unheard; when on the immortal seas,  
Invisible, like a wind, I go and come;  
When days to me are all one breath of change,  
A passing from light to light, an increasing joy,  
And nights bring sudden, spiritual, far-off speech  
Of long departed, unforgotten things,  
Of hearts ne'er found, of friends that still were ours;  
When *here* I need not sit, chained and inert,  
Nor *there* travail all my golden hours away  
At the old mortal tasks—  
Ah, then, when I am free, free as my bold  
And pilgrim thought is now—like the happy air  
Free to be gone—each hour to choose my stay,  
Ah, then, O prisoned spirit that is my Self,  
We will go back to the temples by the sea.

Not there perhaps the gods of our desire  
Will open to us their bright, mysterious hearts.  
Not there nor anywhere in the visible world,  
The mortal soul overtake the wingèd dream,  
Know himself perfect and content; but there,  
At Paestum, long since builded, fallen long since,  
At the brim of the illimitable, calling sea,  
Where once rode ships from all the misty world,  
And thoughts from realms all infinite and serene,  
There where tower up the mighty columns still,  
Glowing with the light of clear, innumerable dawns  
Upon the plain—there we shall be more near,  
Feel at our side the eloquent faint stir,  
The breath, the touch, the longing and the dream  
Of men who like ourselves built in their hearts  
To the God of every race and every clime.



TAKE no thought as to whom you shall marry. Marry whom you please,  
and you will discover that you have somebody else.

# THE OUT TRAIL

By MARY GLASCOCK

I TOLD God's truth when I said the trail was no place for a woman. But Vinton would have it so, and when he had made up his mind I knew the only thing to do was to shrug my shoulders and pack more grub on the sled—sweet things, the kind women like, and extra furs. The dogs already had more than their share, and I'd never known a woman that was worth a number one dog's life. My mother—God bless her—died when I was born, and I'd never seen a woman worth the fuss made about her. Margaret Barry was no exception.

I was gruff in the packing; neither Vint's sop of deference nor Margaret's coaxing smile altered my mind nor my manner. I had agreed to take the trail from Dawson to Nome, to stick by Vinton—we had been partners so long—with a chance to make our fortunes in the ruby sand.

Sinclair had sent word by the last Yukon steamer that they had struck it rich at Nome, and to come quickly before the whole beach was staked.

Things were low at Dawson, and Vint and I decided in a jiffy to quit and take the out trail. Margaret could stay in the cabin—there were women folks in camp—and she could come down the river by the first steamer in the spring, I urged. But Margaret would not stand for it. And when Margaret wills she generally does—I'd learned that long ago and didn't hang around Vint's cabin much after she came. I liked the spirit of the Indian girls, who did as they were told, with no back talk.

Margaret was going, she said, and

she went. I'd half a mind to back out when I found her sitting on the sled before the cabin, wrapped in her parka, laughing at my sour face. If I hadn't sooner cut off my right hand than leave a partner in the lurch, I'd have quit then and there. There she was, saucily making triumphant faces at me as I stooped to fix the dog's harness. She waved her hand to the cheers of the camp as I mushed ahead on my snowshoes to break the trail. I heard her laugh and I grew red to my neck; I was hot clean through. A fool thing for a girl to do—two thousand miles tough traveling down the twisting Yukon, and uncertain weather.

I suppose living alone so much in this frozen country makes a man surly and offish. And I had been beaten for the first time, beaten by this chit of a girl. I might have made Vint see reason in time, but— And there she was, pushing the hood of her parka back from a teasing face, quoting just so I could hear, "When a woman wills she wills"—and the rest of the fool stuff.

It was unbearable. I jerked the fur cap over my ears to shut out the sound, and Vint came up, swinging his stride to mine, which was long enough to keep out of earshot of those mocking words. I grew angrier and answered his questions sulkily, for those foolish words rankled.

The team was a good one; the dogs were yelping in joy of going, and Vint and I walked fast, muscles like steel springs, drinking in the intoxication of the cold, clear air. The snow was crisp under foot; the bite of the cold made the blood tingle. The stillness was welcome as a draught of good

liquor to the throat after the noise of the town. I never have liked the bustle and chortle of a camp. To my mind the peace of this country was when Vint and I bunked alone on Eagle Creek before men swarmed like ants and there was no cackling and talk. I fancied the people we had left were making sport of me. I had boasted that Margaret shouldn't go, setting my will against hers, and mine had become iron in all the years of hardship, work and grim wrestling with circumstance. But Margaret was there—and my will might just as well have been sour dough. It was my pride that was hurt, the tenderest spot in a man's make-up. I knew they were laughing back there.

"A fair start," Vint said, the blood high in his cheeks. He had never quite lost the boy in these past years of man's work. He held up a finger. "No wind. We'll make a far camp tonight."

"Where?" I started; the voice was at my elbow. The snow was so soft you couldn't hear a footfall.

Margaret linked her arm in Vint's, turning her back on me. I fell back to the dogs. She flashed one look in my direction and laughed. She could put any meaning into her laugh. My temper was testy and—yes, I swore and kept back with the dogs, slowing their pace.

So the first day wore on—a glorious day so far as weather went. Over unbroken snow fields we kept close to the ice-locked river with its fringes of lonely trees—only they didn't seem lonely then, but so many welcoming friends speeding us along. Frost crystals shimmered in the air; the sky was hard blue, the snow an endless field of glittering stuff, shining in the cold sun.

"We'll make our first camp here." I spoke gruffly, halting the dogs, for it was the unwritten law that I was to be the leader—I was the elder. Vint was too careless, happy-go-lucky, to care about planning, and I meant to assert my right.

"No, let's camp closer to the river, under the spruce," Margaret begged.

"We camp here," I repeated. And

I saw by the set of her lips that she did not like being overridden, and I was glad.

Vint peeled birch bark, cut spruce boughs to floor the tent and made a fire. Margaret filled a pail with snow to melt for tea, and I looked after the dogs. The air was wonderfully clear and resonant, and the Northern Lights were at the horizon—a glimmer and glitter and flicker of all the colors of the prism, making radiance of the sky. Damn it, a man can't forget there's a God, up here! Sometimes it seems like He is giving a man a hint of the glory beyond, to sort of make up to him for the freezing and lashing below.

I could hear the birch bark snapping, as it caught in the Yukon stove, and the pleasant bubbling of water in the pail. It was Sunday night, and Margaret was chanting cheerfully as she went about getting the evening meal, "Oh, ye ice and cold, bless ye the Lord." And somehow that hurt pride of mine had become a scar. There was healing in the chant and the rain of Northern Lights as I answered Margaret's summons to dinner.

Of course I was a brute and more surly in manner than at the start; I would not look at her. But never was tea so well brewed. Silently I repassed my cup and thawed my throat with the scalding liquid. Margaret should have the best samovar I could buy from a Russian I knew down yonder, when we got to civilization; but I crunched my bread in silence, catching the worried look that Vint threw to her at my churlishness.

I ungraciously offered to wash the dishes, but was met with prompt refusal and a flash of scornful eyes.

"I'll do my share," she said with spirit. And I turned like a whipped cur and slunk off. The flag of pride burned in her cheeks, and I was to be punished. So two could play at that game! I was not spoken to unless it was necessary for taking or giving an order, but I was always treated with fairness. Margaret was square from the tip of her fur hood to her little moccasined feet—and game.



We had but one tent; more could not be carried, and convention could be minced on the Yukon trail. I have already said that our dogs were overloaded. Margaret's sleeping bag was at the back, Vint's between and mine by the flap. There was not a word when we turned in. I looked out through a crack in the canvas. The stars were big that night—giant nuggets, and the moon—if that were of gold! It's queer, but it's true, that a man's mind gets twisted up into thoughts of gold—always gold—like that old heathen king whose touch turned everything to gold. Only, in the Alaska country you have to burn and dig and suffer and break your bones and heart to get at the stuff. But it's in your mind, waking and sleeping. And those stars stood for only gold to me. Sometimes I thought I was turned to metal, too. And as I jerked the flap of the sleeping bag over my eyes I sighed, and my thoughts, my wishes, trailed off into dreams, then to forgetfulness, for a man sleeps hard on the Yukon trail.

The story of the trail has been told so often that it's tiresome. Our journey was no worse than the most, no better. But it's of the people I would have you know. Of course two or three dogs went lame—there was the overload. Vint would not see it that way, and would not lighten it. That night, when I was busy over the fire with the dog food, I heard someone creeping about the sled. I looked away from my mess, pretending the smoke smarted my eyes—birch bark makes an infernal lot of smoke—and I saw Margaret slip to the back of the sled and take cans and bundles from the load—the sweet things brought specially for her. She dropped to the snow like a hunted rabbit when I coughed. I saw her cart away an armful of the stuff, steal to the off side of a tree and cache what she carried, mark a cross with a knife on the bared trunk, then cache another armful. The smoke blinded my eyes—of course it did; I knew by the way they watered. The wind was blowing it away from me,

but— Of course it was the smoke that nearly put them out and strangled in my throat!

Vint had been ugly, sulky the last few days. The travel was telling upon him; he'd grown soft loafing about Dawson, and was a bit snappy with Margaret. I'd caught her looking downhearted and her eyes were red at times. But it wasn't my business. Families have their scraps, and I wasn't going to put in an oar, but paddle my own kayak. Margaret was grit, though—I confess it grudgingly. Vint was downright nasty; he was off his feed. I was mean enough to want to see her weaken. I wanted to see her hateful. She knew I didn't want her along, and she was determined to heap coals of regretfulness on my obstinate head. I'd find stitches taken when I needed them and socks washed out, and I saw, though I pretended not to, that her hands were cracked and bleeding. I saw—God, I can't think of those times and the things I saw! And I did nothing. But there's no use in crying over melted snow. Margaret knew afterward. It's a good deal, when life's always dealt you a pretty rough hand, to know that you had the chance just once to make it trumps.

Two weeks on the trail with unbroken cold and weather threatening wind! That night the silence was stifling—it was thick enough to slash with a knife. I had unhitched the dogs and Margaret had just started dinner, when I took the frying pan out of her hand.

"I've never shirked my part of the work, and I'm not going to now," she said with proper pride, putting back stray bits of curly hair that pushed from under the parka's hood.

"That's true; you haven't. You're a brick." I spoke warmly and held out my hand.

She took it and smiled. Did you ever see a woman smile so that it warmed your heart, breaking the ice off the edges, melting it as fire melts Arctic snow? Well, that smile did. I looked around, startled, still holding the little hand snuggled in the Arctic mit-

tens. I thought for a moment the sun had broken through that thick, sullen, gray silence. Instead, snow was coming down in flakes as big as down on a swan's breast. The peak of Margaret's hood was already white, and she chanted, "Oh, ye ice and snow, bless ye the Lord," from a full heart.

The bacon was sizzling in the pan, and there couldn't be any smell on earth as good as that bacon smelled that night.

"I'm so glad we're friends again," she said, turning over the thick slices. "Do you like your bacon thin?"

"I like it any way you cook it," I said humbly, thankful for the first time that she was there to cook it for me. The shoulders of her parka were thick with heavy snow. She shook it off as the huskies do from their coats. Vint was nowhere to be seen. I asked for him.

"Gone for more wood," she said, calling my attention to the hissing snow as it fell in the hot pan.

"We'll have to eat in the tent to-night," I said.

Just then Vint came from the sled with a can in his hand. "I want you to warm this up for me. I'm tired of bacon and grease and beans," he said shortly. "It's a hard, long trail, John." He turned to me, straddling a log close to the stove. "No more glare ice, I'll be bound. It'll be heavy sledding for a week. This storm's going to hang on. I heard wolves back a piece. When they come near camp it means a storm to beat the band."

Margaret looked up, her face red from the fire. "Can't we camp here till it blows over?"

"No," Vint said. "The Nome beach may all be staked now. We've got to push on; I told you so before we started. We've got to grab our everlasting fortune out of this God-forsaken land. Sinclair says it's there in the ruby sands. I'm tired of being thrown down. John and I've got to beat the game this time and win out. And we'll stake for you, Margaret, and then it's back to God's country for you and

me, old girl. John can stay if he likes. But I want to live where the sun shines and the fields are green and there's stuff to eat that doesn't grow in blamed tin cans."

"One country's the same as another to me," I said, fastening the flap to keep out the drifting snow. We could feel it press weightily against the wall of the tent like a heavy, soft, pushing hand. I went on: "I have nobody belonging to me, and this is as good as any other country. I'll tie to it, I guess—it's kinder to failures."

Margaret looked long and earnestly at me, but did not speak.

"This canned stuff's good. Have some?" Vint handed the heated tin to me, then set to with heaped plate.

"Only a little," I said, and helped myself gingerly. Margaret refused.

"Well, I'll finish the can," Vint declared.

He was a fine-looking, stalwart lad, with a girl's fine skin and blue eyes like Margaret's, and a lot of curly hair—like Margaret's, too. But there was something in his chin, not quite strong—unlike Margaret's. That night he sang and told stories of home and camp. Margaret was rather quiet. I fancied she was straining her ears to listen to the distant wolf howls and that they made her uneasy; she paid but half-attention to Vint's banter and chatter.

"It's a long way out of the world—here alone." She turned to me and her teeth chattered. "The wolves are coming nearer; listen!" She laid her hand on the sleeve of my fur coat. "Listen!"

"Pshaw! We'll have neighbors to-night; it won't be so quiet. Wolves are the biggest cowards." I laughed to reassure her.

I stepped to the tent flap. Snow was falling {thickly, steadily; you couldn't see the ice of the river; the birch trees were turning into sheeted ghosts. All space was filled with falling flakes, falling soundless, but always piling on the whiteness below. Down—not far from where she had cached the tins—the howl of a wolf came un-

comfortably near. I turned and looked into her eyes widened with fear.

"I can't help it; I'm afraid tonight." I started to go out. "Don't leave me." She clung to my coat. Vint was already asleep. "Would you mind staying awake for a little while? I'm frightened." Her hands trembled, and she drew in her breath with a little choking sound.

I came back and sat down on a fur robe, wrapping her in another spare one. Vint was snoring heavily on his back. "The trail is no place for a woman," kept running through my head; but somehow I was not sorry that this woman was here.

So quickly changes ring in a woman that I could not believe it when she laughed softly and whispered to me so as not to disturb Vint: "Let's see who can remember most of the prayer book. It won't wake him, and will keep us from thinking. Vint always sleeps hard—always has since he was a boy."

"I've never known any prayer book," I said, shamed to confess it when she had taken it so for granted that I did.

"Never mind." She repeated litany, chant and prayer, half singing some, and told me the name of each. What she said I hardly knew, but the babble of her voice was pleasing; it was a soft, low voice. Somewhere, I remembered, someone had said *that* was an excellent thing in a woman. Was it, I wondered, in the prayer book? Then and there I resolved to learn the prayer book after our fortunes were made at Nome. I'd never had time for religion, but God surely lived in this country, though Vint denied it.

We had brought the Yukon stove inside and piled it full of wood, but I couldn't sleep and tossed restlessly in my sleeping bag. At last the fire went out; snow stopped falling, and I knew by the creeping cold that a freeze had come. "Good traveling tomorrow," I thought, and turned again for the dozenth time, trying to make myself comfortable. That wolf howled nearer; it seemed to me I could hear his

malignant snarl at the tent flap. I did not feel just right. But Margaret was sleeping—I could tell by the regular breathing in the back of the tent; and Vint, old fellow, was dead to the freeze and wolves. Then I must have fallen asleep, for someone was shaking me and calling my name. I sat up sleepily, my knuckles in my eyes.

"Come quick; do something!" It was Margaret standing by me. My eyes flew open. Vint was writhing on the floor.

"What is it?" I strode to the Yukon stove and set a handful of birch afire. The water in the pail, though inside the tent, was solid ice; it was well on toward morning.

I hope never again to see such agony as Vinton Barry's. We got the medical stores, and in time—it seemed an eternity—the water boiled. But nothing was of any use. The boy wandered on about green fields and great feasts, and then moaned pitifully. It was all over with poor old Vint—quick and sharp—not a bad way to go, I thought, when your call's due. But there was Margaret. I was so dizzy on my feet—the pain worming into my vitals—that I could hardly stand. I saw the girl through a mist, but I *couldn't* give up. No credit was due me; I had to keep up. There she crouched at his side till morning, and I stupidly did nothing but cram wood into the stove. I made tea, which she refused; then I must have fallen to the floor, for I felt liquor poured between my teeth, and I came to. I had no business to give way even for a moment, for Margaret was alone. It was weakness not fit for a man.

The cold was intense, the wind blowing; you felt the shiver of its touch even through the furs, the numbing frost bite in cheeks and fingers; but it was clear. Margaret got breakfast in silence, only looking at me with dumb eyes, her face drawn and white with misery and pain. I could hardly keep on my feet. The stuff that had killed Vint had made me deadly sick; but I had to keep a grip upon myself for her sake. She was a woman, and I must

not lose nerve; I must not go as Vint had and leave her alone on the trail. It was God's truth; the trail was no place for a woman.

I read pleading in her eyes, but I put her gently out of the tent. I wrapped Vint's body in a piece of sail-cloth which we had to fasten over the flap for double protection on nights of unusual freeze. I lashed the body on the sled, lessening the dog's load of provisions—there was no need of providing for three.

"I'm sorry," I said, coming toward her. "You'll have to strap on your snowshoes and guide the sled. I'll break trail—you can manage the dogs."

"I can do that," she said, her shoulders thrown back in superb grit. Her eyes thanked me as they saw the load on the sled.

"I could not leave him." I joined her for a moment before we started. "The ground is frozen harder than granite; we could not—"

"I understand—the wolves." She shuddered. "Thank you." And she mushed bravely along.

We made small distance that day. My tracks were zigzag; my brain was burning, my head reeling. The trees on the river bank kept up a curious curtesying to my eyes; the snow waved like a broad banner flaunted by the wind. I was not right; I knew it. But that tall, slim girl marched on, never tiring, never stopping until I made a false excuse of needing rest.

That night we camped at a bend of the Yukon. Silently she made the tea. How the wind roared and struck the sides of the tent and whined through the trees! I pegged it tight, but something outside was begging to come in, trying to force an entrance. I went to the flap two or three times to see, though I knew it was a foolish imagining. She sat with her head sunk in the hood of the parka, her hands to her face, swaying to and fro, no sound coming from her lips. Those two had been very near to each other. Motherless, fatherless, they had clung together ever since she had left an un-

welcome home with relatives. They were closer than most brothers and sisters.

When I came staggering in with the load from the sled in my arms and laid it on the floor in the old place where he used to lie, she looked up. Then tears came and ran through her fingers down to the fur.

"The wolves?" she asked.

I nodded. My voice was throaty; I could not speak. I, too, had loved the lad. "Go to sleep. I'll keep watch," I commanded roughly; there was no other way.

No answer but a low, moaning sound and the pound of the wind on the tent roof. That died away in time, and Margaret, exhausted, slept in her fur bag. I went out and stood by the tent. The Northern Lights crossed the sky, glimmering, glittering like silver rain, and somehow I felt that Vint spoke to me in them. There was light somewhere, and we *must* push on. "Oh, all ye ice and snow, bless ye the Lord"—I prayed in those words and went in.

She tried to make me believe she was still asleep, poor girl, but I caught stifled sobs—my ears had been trained to wood sounds. I had heard the whimper of wild things in the trap and let them out—the trapper damning me, but this trap I could not open.

There's no use in going over those days and nights. We were over half-way to Nome. There was no use in turning back; we had to go on. We avoided the scattered trading posts; that was the way she would have it. Mechanically she went through the work of the day, adding to her woman's tasks a man's. Mile after mile she trudged without complaint. There seemed miles enough to lead to Hell, but that woman tramped them without a word. I was sick to death, sick of the whiteness, the silence—sick of heart, sick of soul. But she plodded on uncomplaining, only asking at each day's end how many miles more. The lame dogs died, but there were enough to carry the ghastly load. And each night it lay on the floor between the

flap and the corner where she slept, sometimes heavily, from very weariness of flesh, sometimes fitfully, from scourging of spirit.

I—I got better; trust a man's strength for that. But I could not sleep; I held my breath to listen to her breathing. I kept watch for fear she'd go mad from that ghastly burden between us—the cold, of course, had frozen the body stiff, and it could lie there. I found myself watching the folds of the sailcloth to see if they moved, and sometimes I thought—I thought I could see a heaving over the chest, and I would creep near and listen and put my hand over the spot where the heart should be. And always that long howl of a wolf. I fancied it was the same wolf following us down the river, and I would steal out with my rifle, hate in my heart, to kill, but, fire as I did, always a gray, lean shadow lost itself among the dark spruce and a hoarse, taunting howl answered the challenge of my bullet.

The weather was fair at last, cold and still, giving a keen snap to the blood. And she stood it with grit beyond believing, keeping her sweet sanity. I think she sensed the tottering in my brain and kept her head, to save us both. We said fewer words as the miles grew less, but the tireless pluck of that woman was never equaled in Heaven above or earth below. Always the unfailing sweetness and more than readiness to share with me the labors of the day. "Work brings sleep," she said to me. "Let me do it for that mercy." The face under the hood of the parka grew pinched and thin—she ate so little—and her eyes were caverns of light. The line of her mouth was pale and set; the look in her face desperate. The parka hung looser on her frame, but no rest would she hear of, and we pushed ourselves and the dogs to the utmost. Then came the frozen tundra and the low lying hills rimming Nome.

"We're nearly there," I whispered. Her eyes gazed vacantly across the vast snow-packed tundra, and I heard her sigh very quietly.

The dizziness came to my head again, and it was near to bursting, but I made her sit at the feet of the burden, and the dogs made a last brave pull. She could no longer stand on her feet. I went ahead and the dogs followed without sound of voice. In the clear distance—you can see great distances across the tundras—we saw tents and lean-tos, hastily jumbled together shacks huddled on the beach of Nome.

"It's there." I pointed.

I tried to halloo. My voice seemed stiff from disuse; I staggered as the old mastodons must have, ages ago, when done to death on this very plain. I was a big, rugged man, but I felt as weak as a year-old kid, now that relief was in sight.

A speck showed on the horizon; a man loomed into shape. I stopped stone still and sat down in the snow at the foot of the sled, my knees drawn to my chin. At the sound of a human voice Margaret buried her face in her hood, and again blessed tears came.

"What's the trouble, friends?" he asked. "Where do you hail from? What can I do for you?"

"Shelter for the woman; Christian burial for the man," was all I said. I had said those words over so often to myself that they spoke themselves.

I saw him shrink from the load on the sled as he came nearer and looked at us.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"Margaret Barry and John Grant, from Dawson. And this"—I laid my hand gently on the sailcloth—"was Vinton Barry."

"Good God!" he exclaimed. "I am Sinclair. I've been expecting Vint. I didn't expect him to come—this way."

"He has struck the last trail," I answered curtly. I did not like his looking so long at Margaret, and she in tears. We kept pace together, and he told me that the beach was staked to the last inch. Claims were almost shoulder to shoulder; it was the richest mining camp in the world, but—we were too late. I remember I laughed. Gold seemed such a little thing to care



for then, so little to me, who had known such larger things in those past weeks.

Shelter was there for Margaret with a decent woman who lived in a beach shack, sharing the work and adventure with her husband. And for me? Well, they say I was a bit dipsy for a week or so, not quite clear on my legs—shame to me! I suppose the stuff that killed Vint had left some poison in my system. They said I lay like a log and muttered. I didn't know—I didn't care. Margaret was safe, and I—

Her voice was the first I heard. There was a finer dignity about her than I have ever seen or ever shall see in woman, as she stood looking down at me in my tumbled bunk, her eyes full of a soft light and—pity. My heart leaped to the look. I sat up, shaking the sloth of sickness from me. From that day I was a man. Sinclair was with her. We had much to thank him for, and he had been Vint's friend. I noticed that all her resolute air was gone. She seemed to lean toward Sinclair—to cling. I liked that tender air in a woman. Margaret Barry was a woman of snow and fire and flint and soft, yielding sand—but that's neither here nor there.

There was gold dust enough in the bags for Margaret's keep with the woman, and Vint rested in a decent grave. Nothing was left to glean at Nome, so I decided to leave her to Sinclair's guardianship and the woman's, and go—no matter where—to tear our fortune from the frozen earth. I saw in the precious gold a golden future.

Oh, it was good to live on that beach at Nome, to creep out into cold sunshine, to look over the frozen waters, notwithstanding the bitter, driving wind. I was warmed by Margaret's divine pity. It looked from her eyes; it spoke in her words.

I went, as I said before—no matter where—where no white man had garnered before me. I staked claims for her and for me. I lived alone, burned through the snow, dug and starved and suffered. It was the old creek

life; I had been broken to that and my muscles were steel-hardened—and there was that golden future, also much to think of. Man ponders deep when his own voice is the only human sound he hears. I struck it rich—coarse gold thick as currants in a bun—on Margaret's claim. Mine was worthless, not a show of color. I didn't care; I threw up my hat and shouted, and stacked the stuff in my cabin and made haste back to Nome. The outer world again for Margaret and—I checked my thoughts as I did my dogs, from too swift running.

Nome beach again. I was tattered and worn, trail sore. I knew how gaunt, how rough I was; I knew I was not fit to go to her unshaven and unwashed, but to the woman's cabin I went. Margaret was not there. I was sent to a shack on higher ground. Up I went, my fur coat hanging in tatters to my heels, the wolf dogs barking at me as I passed, but I knew Margaret; she was not of the kind to be finicky about coats.

Two people stood at the cabin door watching my coming. She saw me first. I can hear her little short cry now as I lie on my bunk at the old worked-out claim. It was glad—yes, that was the truth.

"Good news, Margaret!" I cried. And I could have hugged her close to my ragged coat, I was that glad to see her. My heart was big within me; it had been a year that I had hungered every day to hear her voice, to look into her eyes.

"David"—she put her hand into Sinclair's—"John has come home. Our home is yours, John. Come in." She took my hands, dirt-grimed as they were, in hers and pulled me toward the door.

"Our home!" That old sickness of the trail staggered my senses; my head whirled. I halted at the threshold—I was drunken from the sight of her.

"Our home is yours," she repeated simply and led me in.

I looked at her long and silently. All that future I had planned was gone. I felt that some strange stone man had

taken my place. I felt his stiffness in my manner, my words. He it was who passed over to her husband the papers duly made out for the claim and told him of the fabulous wealth that was hers.

"And you, John?" she asked, clinging to David Sinclair's arm.

"My claim is next to yours," I said lamely, and let them take the words for what they were worth.

The man looked up; he was keen-eyed, shifty-eyed. His look dropped to the floor, and he stubbed at the skin rugs with his shoe.

"What wonderful luck for us both!" she said in a whisper. "Now, David, we can go out to the green fields—and you'll come with us, John?"

"I've grown into these parts," I said roughly. "I don't want to go. I came here with the papers for you, and I'm going to mush back to my claim as soon as the dogs are rested. I've short business in Nome—now

the papers are made out," I said, rising.

They say there are depths under depths in Hell—I touched bottom that day.

Back at my played-out claim. Played out? There was never a show of color in it; wrapped in a wolf skin, I'm trying to work it all out. Love! I couldn't have loved her if I hadn't given her up and given her the best. Love? Why, love is forgetting yourself and remembering—yes, remembering always the loved one. It wouldn't be love if self were in it. Love is the crucifixion of self!

By the long trail we traveled and suffered together, I wish Margaret every happiness in God's world. Me? Oh, I'll just mush along any old way until the claim they call living is played out. But if he fails her, there's no trail so long nor rough, I'll not find him. Then—



## REGRET

By L. B. COLEY

### REGRET?

Not with the aid of countless years  
Can I erase from memory  
The thought of what you were to me;  
And yet  
Methinks my grief would lose its sting  
If you'd return that diamond ring.

(N. B.—It is not paid for yet.)



**A** HANDSOME man knows his world, but not always his power. A beautiful woman knows her power, but not always her world.

# THE RHYMERS

By ARTHUR STRINGER

**W**E fret along the deep and day by day  
Refashion dreams, and with despairing hand  
Enscroll a little music on the sand,  
And tide by tide our names are washed away.

We are the idlers who still idly turn  
To ask if aught of life survives the years,  
And on th' erasing sands engrave our fears,  
And from th' engulfing sea no answer learn!



## SOME MODERN DEFINITIONS

**FRIENDSHIP**—Any acquaintance in the pursuance of which we see profit.

**TOMORROW**—The day upon which we overtake happiness—find a true friend—meet a truthful human; the day when the indolent labor and the fools reflect.

**HONOR**—That quality which prompts a man to avenge attacks upon his own women, but fails to restrain him from making attacks upon other men's women.

**PANIC**—Business indigestion following financial stuffing.



## GENERALLY SPEAKING

**S**HE—What do they make in a chafing dish?  
**H**E—Indigestion.

# TO THE RESCUE OF TEDDY

By JESSIE ATKINSON McGRIFF

**A**FTER tucking John Randolph, Jr., into his crib for the night, I wandered to the piazza and sank into my favorite chair with a book. It was such a good book that, upon hearing steps on the graveled walk, I looked up with undisguised annoyance, which quickly changed to pleasure, however, when I recognized my youngest brother, Theodore, on the lower step.

"Hello!" he greeted me laconically.

"Why, Teddy! Is it really, truly you? Come on up."

"Thanks, but I—I—don't believe I have time."

"Oh, yes, I'm sure you have. Come on."

"Nuh. Guess I'd better be going. I just dropped round to ask how the kid is."

"Baby? Why, he's as well as can be. What made you think—"

"Nothing. I dunno—I thought he might be colicky—or—or something."

"No, *indeed*. But it was good of you to think of it. Do come up and sit with me a while. I'm all alone."

"Where's John?"

"At the club. *Won't* you come up?"

"Well, I dunno—I guess maybe I might as well for a minute," he conceded as he stepped reluctantly to the veranda, dropped his soft, round felt hat on the magazine table and flung himself into the comfortable wicker chair opposite me. He shook the thick brown hair out of his eyes with an impatient little toss of his head and hunched his shoulders in a manner that suggested an ill fitting coat.

But I knew it wasn't his coat, so I waited, watching him the while with interest and incipient apprehension.

He was manifesting symptoms quite familiar to me and which I recognized as correlative with symptoms conspicuous in his two older brothers at certain serious stages in their callow youth, usually at some period between the ages of nineteen and twenty-one, so that Teddy, at twenty, found me not entirely unprepared. I knew there was something in his diffident bosom that clamored for utterance; something that had grown too big to hold, but that the thought of letting go made his throat feel dry and choky and his heart beat in muffled thumps against his silk negligée shirt. Teddy has always been so utterly boyish, so vigorously strong in his youthful sufficiency, that I premeditated this test of my sisterly devotion with more or less dismay. And yet, had he fought it out alone, had he carried his confidence elsewhere, I don't think I could ever have outgrown the heartache of it.

Teddy picked up the paper cutter and examined it minutely, held it to the light, squinted along its keen edge speculatively, then frowned, sighed and laid it carefully down upon the table again. He had seen and used that paper cutter a dozen times or more, so this sudden unnatural interest in it did not deceive me in the slightest degree, and when he threw his leg over the arm of his chair, thereby exposing to view six inches of silk hose of a most vociferous blue, I *knew*, then, beyond all conjecture, and prayed for the intuitive tact that I felt the situation would demand; for whenever my brothers took to wearing hosiery of that particularly vivid hue it proclaimed to me the exact state of their affections.

The silence between us was becoming oppressive. Teddy pushed his fingers down between his collar and his sunburned neck and tugged desperately.

"We have not seen much of you this summer, Ted," I ventured at last.

"Well, no—you see, I have been running down to the beach a good deal—that is—occasionally. It has been so beastly hot in town."

"Yes?"

"And the ocean breeze and surf bathing are just what a fellow needs to tone up his nervous system."

"Nervous system? Why, boy, I didn't know you had one."

"Well—I dunno—I guess it's my nerves. It's something. I know I don't sleep well, and then I have a beastly feeling all the time as if somebody had kicked me in the pit of my stomach."

"Goodness gracious! Have you seen a physician?"

"Naw. Doctors can't do anything. I'll tell you just what it is, Margy. I've been trying to keep pace with the gang—smokers, late hours, that sort of thing. You know how it is with a fellow. He gets going and hasn't the sense to say when he's had enough. Late hours don't agree with me, anyhow. There comes a time in every man's life when all that foolishness palls on him, makes him realize what an astounding ass he's been making of himself just for the amusement of a set of blithering smart Alecks. I tell you I'm sick of it! I've cut it all out!"

I nodded approvingly. "I'm sure I'm glad to hear it, dear."

"Yes," he continued seriously, "all that is well enough for sprigs who think it's smart to pose as men of the world, but I tell you, sis, when a man reaches a certain age he craves—er—er—to settle down to homelier pleasures."

"You mean—ahem—more domestic pleasures?" I threw out cautiously. Teddy's smooth brown cheeks turned russet red and he twisted uneasily in his chair. I hurriedly withdrew my eyes from his burning face and dropped them to the pages of my book. I felt

that the psychological moment was approaching, and I awaited it in a state of nervous apprehension. One false move and I knew that Teddy's lips would be sealed to me forever.

"Well, you see, it's just this, sis—"

His voice sounded so odd and husky that I dared not look up.

"Yes?" I whispered softly, encouragingly.

"I mean to get married!" He blurted it out at me with quick, boyish defiance.

"Tell me about it, honey," I replied calmly as I closed the book and laid it upon the table.

He jammed his hands down fiercely into the pockets of his coat and scowled menacingly at the floor.

"That's about all, I guess, except—except—I wish you'd do me a good turn, Margy."

"A hundred if I can. What is it?"

"Well—I may as well tell you that I mean to quit college and buckle down to earning a living. I am not such a noodle as to think a man can marry and live on love. I realize fully the responsibility of my position. I don't mean to allow my family to sponge on my people."

"I'm glad to see you feel that way about it, lad, but don't you—don't you think it unwise to throw away your chance of an education that will in later life fit you—"

"Aw, hang it! I know all that—but there's only one course for a man of honor to pursue. I must earn a living somehow, and as I can't earn it in college I want you to ask old John to give me a trial in his office. I wouldn't mind starting low and working up. I don't mind work." He threw out his chest and grasped a muscular forearm.

"Of course I understand what you mean, Theodore," I replied gravely, "but don't you think it rather unfair to bind the young lady by any promise until you are in a position to support her?"

"Yes, I did think of that. I hadn't really meant to ask her until—but—and then one day we were—"

"Of course, of course," I interrupted

hastily, for I didn't want him to harbor any regrets later on. "And she?"

"She says she'll not give me a definite answer until she has thought it over. I'm going down to the beach Sunday to find out about it."

"She stays at the beach?"

"Uh-huh. Lives there—that is, in the summer. She takes in boarders," he supplemented doggedly.

"Oh! Is she a widow?"

"Yes, she's a widow."

"A young widow, I presume."

"She's thirty-two," announced Teddy resolutely. "She's a mighty sensible woman, sis, I can tell you. Not one of the silly girly-girly type you get so infernally sick of. She's substantial—just the sort of anchor a fellow needs to keep him straight."

"You don't think the disparity in years—" I hinted.

"Oh, I've thought of *that*," he reassured quickly; "but, you see, I've been always considered very mature for my years—everybody says so—and that makes it about even—see? And then her children help to keep her young," he added.

"You mean they *will* help," I corrected.

"I mean they *do* help," he insisted. "She has three."

"Merciful heavens!" The ejaculation burst from me against my will.

"Yes," Teddy continued, oblivious now to everything save the subject nearest his heart, "yes, she has a tough time of it, poor little woman, and of course the twins make it doubly so—they require so much of her attention."

"*Twins!*" I gasped. "Teddy, you don't mean to tell me—"

"Yes, I do," he went on cheerfully. "Two of 'em are twins. Cute little beggars. I'm fond of 'em already."

I collapsed in my chair and gazed at him blankly, seeking vainly to recall past diplomacy brought into play during similar heart to heart talks with Albert and Frederick. But despair seized me when I realized the futility of comparison. The situation was so utterly absurd, and yet the impulse to give way to mirth was checked on my

lips as I contemplated the sober earnestness of the boy's face.

"I should think, Teddy," I at last timidly suggested, "that a young man would prefer not to be handicapped with a ready made family."

"But I can have one of my own later on, can't I?" defended the youngster. "And, anyhow, there's no use throwing that up to me *now*. I have fully made up my mind to marry her—if she will have me," he added humbly.

"You think she may refuse you?" I clutched at this greedily.

"A fellow never knows what to expect from a woman," he asserted oracularly. "But I know *this*: if she throws me down I shall probably go to the dogs."

He said this with an air of such tragic finality that I shuddered involuntarily. Dear lad! He was so desperately in earnest sitting there, his thick hair in comical disorder, the resolute determination of his square chin mocked by the girlish dimple which cleft it.

I sank back in my chair and closed my eyes. There was no time to be lost. I must think of some way to extricate him from his juvenile sentimentalism. Presently I leaned forward and looked for a moment steadily into his golden brown eyes.

"Teddy," I said, "your eloquence has decided me to do the very best I can to help you. What do you think of this: John is going to leave next week for Nevada to look after his mining interests there. His secretary is ill and unable to make the trip. He will be gone six weeks. If he should ask you to accompany him in the capacity of secretary, would you go?"

"*Would I!*" cried Teddy, beaming.

"You see," I continued judiciously, "six weeks of constant association will enable you to discover each other's limitations and peculiarities. You will then have a chance to view John not in the familiar light of a brother-in-law but as a man of business. You can study his ways and methods, and when you return, if you are still desirous of flunking your college course and starting in at the office, you will feel entitled



to a certain amount of consideration as a man of more or less experience, and, in addition, I feel sure that the bracing air out there is just the tonic you need for your nervous complaint. What do you think of my plan?"

Teddy did not reply. He rose, and coming over to my chair, placed his hand in clumsy affection upon my shoulder.

"Sis," he said huskily, and his eyes were very tender, "you are a corking good fellow." As he was going down the steps, he turned to me again.

"Are you sure it will be all right with old John?"

"I am *quite* sure, dear," I smiled back at him.

On a drowsy afternoon the following spring I was sitting out on the fresh green lawn watching with adoring eyes John Randolph, Jr., as he lay flat on his stomach in the clover, grunting with delight, his chubby legs waving lustily in the air, one dirty little fist clutching a large, pink, appetizing clover blossom, over which he drooled and slobbered affectionately. Suddenly he emitted a squeal of ecstatic welcome and lurched clumsily over on his back, where he lay wriggling expectantly.

"Hello, there, Buster!" and before I could remonstrate he was hoisted astride the neck of his Uncle Teddy.

"Put him down, Ted. He's a perfect mud pie. He'll ruin your clothes."

Teddy glanced down uncertainly at the two little grass-stained shoes which were crossed confidently beneath his chin, hesitated a moment, then set his nephew gently upon the grass; and even a mother's heart could not feel resentment when I noted the careful elaboration of my brother's toilet.

"How nice you look!" I exclaimed spontaneously.

"Thanks." He flushed with gratification. Drawing a faintly perfumed linen handkerchief from his pocket, he shook it out, spread it carefully on the grass and seated himself upon it. In the corner nearest to me I noted that his initials were wonderfully entwined in a manner that bespoke rosy fingers

and infinite pains. He clasped an ankle in either hand, and again I saw the glint of azure hose between his slim brown fingers. I glanced at the racquet which he had dropped beneath a tree.

"Been playing tennis?"

"Ye-ah. Had a corking game over at Bob Damon's. That little sister of his is certainly a precocious infant when it comes to handling a tennis racquet." He pulled up a blade of grass and chewed it reminiscently. "A fellow certainly appreciates a little exercise after he has been cooped up for a couple of months over his exams. I've been feeling like a mellow squash ever since my graduation."

"But just think of the flying colors, the honor and glory—to say nothing of the family pride. You surely have no regrets about the college finish, Teddy," I chided.

"That's right," he agreed. "That is right! Just think, sis, if it hadn't been for old John and that trip I'd have chucked the whole thing. It does beat all outdoors what an amazing dub a fellow can make of himself sometimes."

I permitted the latent significance implied by this last remark to pass without comment, and gave my attention to John Randolph, Jr., who was leaning perilously forward, eyes bulged with admiring curiosity, fat forefinger pointed accusingly at his uncle's ankles.

"P-r-t, p-r-t—p-r-t," he articulated with insistence, "p-r-t—p-r-t!"

"What d'ye suppose the little beggar wants?" inquired Teddy.

"I—I think it's your socks," I explained hesitatingly.

He reddened, grinned and modestly pulled down the hem of his white flannel trousers, at which John Randolph protested with a resonant wail of indignation. I presented him with a fresh, pink clover blossom, but he spurned it wrathfully. Teddy leaned down and resigned his enticing mop of hair to the mercy of the baby's ruthless fingers, but to no purpose. John Randolph's sensitive feelings were wounded, and he insisted with all the power of his small lungs that we should know it.

"Do you think you could bark like a dog?" I at last suggested in desperation.

"Bark like a dog?"

"Yes. John always barks like a dog when everything else fails, and it generally succeeds."

Teddy did bark like a dog, or as near like a dog as he could, which immediately caused a wail of despair to halt midway and end in a gurgling of contemptuous derision.

"Well—I'll be knocked into a cocked hat!" exclaimed my brother, staring at the baby with ill concealed curiosity. "What an odd little insect he is!"

"Don't be stupid! All babies are like that," I defended resentfully, drawing John Randolph into my lap. Then I looked at Teddy sternly, even a trifle accusingly. I was thinking of the twins. It was on the tip of my tongue to remind him of them, but he forestalled me.

"I hear that you and John are going to give a house party at the beach next month."

"We had thought of it," I admitted.

"A lot of old fossils, I suppose?"

"Not quite, my dear, but society befitting our years, of course."

"Huh!" snorted Teddy disgustedly.

"And what is old Demi-John, here, going to do, eh, with no one to amuse him? You can't expect his father to get down on his knees when he yowls, and yelp at him and then get up and entertain his friends with any decent self-respect, can you? He really wouldn't, would he? And you surely don't mean to deprive old Buster, here, of all society and amusement befitting his

infantile years? You wouldn't have the heart to do that, would you?"

The subtle insinuation of Teddy's tone put me on my guard. Again I thought of the twins.

"What would you suggest?" I asked warily.

"Why, that you invite some of the younger generation for Demi-John's diversion so that you and old John can have some pleasure in the company of your friends. Now, I haven't an earthly thing to do next month, and I wouldn't in the least object to taking care of the kiddie for you, and I have a friend who has—"

"I think I know what you are driving at, Teddy," I interrupted hastily. "But you must know that what you wish is impossible. Why, I don't even know her name."

"Oh, my eye! That can be fixed all right. I'll just bring her over with some of the girls some afternoon to tea."

"But, Teddy, I couldn't really—I—I—and anyway, I hoped that you had outgrown the folly of that infatuation."

"My, but you're putting it strong, sis! It really isn't so serious as all that."

"And then," I went on hurriedly, "you must admit that the twins would make it—well—rather awkward for me, to say the least."

My brother gazed at me in blank amazement, which changed rapidly to frank contempt for my utter density.

"Oh, shucks!" he exclaimed in fine disgust. "I wasn't thinking of *her*! I meant Bob Damon's sister."



**W**HILE etiquette and chivalry would have entitled Eve to precedence, yet Adam was created first, probably on the theory that a woman can't be trusted alone.



**W**HEN a person says he trusts another, he means he trusts his own judgment of the other.

January, 1910—5

# LOVE—A TRIBUTE

By J. L. O'CONNOR

**L**OVE is a game,  
Ending the same,  
Whether you win or lose it.  
A smile and a kiss,  
A moment of bliss,  
Affection so warm it will sizzle and hiss,  
Then, awaking, you learn there is something amiss,  
Though you're never quite sure that you know what it is.  
Be wise while you can and refuse it.

Love is a play,  
Staged every day,  
But they who take part ne'er tell it.  
Love is a curse—  
Sometimes it's worse—  
For the fool and his dream often end with the hearse,  
And the symbol of love is rampant, a purse,  
Its mouth choked with gold and the motto "Disperse,"  
For love—Bah! They buy and sell it!



## CERTAINLY THAT

**D**EWITT—Is that your better half?  
**J**EWETT—That is my more expensive half.



**P**OOOR human bluebottle flies! We light upon the axletree of the chariot  
wheel of Fate, strenuously beat our little impotent wings and compla-  
cently remark upon what dust we raise.

# A MAN'S RIGHT

By EDITH BARNARD DELANO

**I**T was natural, when the three of us got together, that our thoughts and speech should turn upon Milman, for Milman had very often made the pleasantest possible fourth in a quartet of friends who had never yet seen too much of each other.

Of the three, two of us were married. Indeed, we were even then the guests of Wilson's very pretty young wife at their mountain cottage. Mrs. Wilson was not so old a matron that she had forsworn the effort to induce her unmarried friends to take unto themselves partners in joy; it occurred to me on the way up that it was possibly with this end in view that she had invited Pleasants, and I wondered whom she had selected to become his fate. I was grateful that she did not hold it against me that I was married even before she met Ralph, and was so gracious as to include me in the house party I expected to meet; for my wife was abroad with her mother, who had been too ill to go alone and had insisted on trying St. Gervais-les-Bains, thereby leaving me for the first time to that most forlorn of marital experiences, a summer alone in the city.

I was prepared to be grateful enough for the week or two of home life offered by charming Mrs. Wilson, even with the rest of a house party thrown in; but I was much more grateful, and very agreeably surprised, to find upon my arrival at the Firs that Pleasants and I were the only guests. Wilson partially explained this by saying that his wife's last effort at assorting bliss had ended in grief and recriminations, and the further explanation offered itself when Pleasants left us every morning to walk

down the hill for his mail, not trusting the man to bring it up with the rest, saying that he liked the exercise. Mrs. Wilson and I were always very good friends, and she had a way of reading my thoughts which amused her husband exceedingly—he was naturally given to noticing little things. So one morning in my first week there, when we three were standing on the terrace watching Pleasants stride down for that mail as if he were going for a doctor, Mrs. Wilson's gaze drew mine, and I turned to find her watching me with a quizzical smile.

"So you understand why, do you?" she laughed.

"Yes," I said, and Ralph and I smiled as she ran off with a backward wave of the hand and a laughing shrug, as if she felt herself quite rid of the Pleasants affair.

The terrace was a part of the rather elaborate garden arrangement with which the Wilsons had surrounded their pretty cottage of cream-tinted stucco; they had given much taste and attention to this place, and it was one of the most charming of the many that topped the neighboring hills. Ralph was particularly fond of the setting of fir trees and pines, interspersed with big hardwoods, just back of the house, and their depths drew him into a mood for work when other inspiration failed. He was not a methodical person, and could scribble away in one place about as well as in another when the mood was on him; I suppose that was the result of his newspaper apprenticeship. The firs seemed to hold as great a charm for Pleasants. He used to spend the mornings there, painting the varying

architecture of the woods, while Wilson and I sprawled around and watched the arches come out from the smudges of color he daubed on the canvas before him; Pleasants was reveling in the combination of line and color, the varying perspectives of the forest, after having been hard at work for many months over more definite architectural forms. It was he who spoke first of Milman.

"I say, wouldn't poor old Milman love these trees!" he suggested, and, pausing, turned toward us.

We were silent for a moment, for we all loved Milman.

"Where is he now?" I asked.

Pleasants turned again to his sketch. When he spoke his voice had a sound of accusation, as if he were imputing the blame and pity of it to us.

"He's down at some sloppy little seaside place, trying to teach a lot of girls how to paint red cows and green grass and blue skies—that's where he is."

Ralph and I smoked away in silence for a while. Then I asked: "He didn't get any of his pictures into the Academy this year, did he?"

"Any?" emphasized Pleasants. "He spent one year—one year, mind you—on one little picture. I saw it."

"What was it?" I asked again.

"Oh, Lord, I don't know!" said Pleasants. "Same old thing—interior; just what anybody could do. No life to it! That's what's the matter with everything he does—it's all *dead*—flat—no breath, no pulse." Again he said, in a lower tone, "Poor old Milman!"

"But he's happy, on the whole," I presently ventured.

"Happy?" came scornfully from Pleasants. He was in that state where happiness can be very definitely defined as meaning but the one thing. "Happy? He's *not* happy; he's just existing, working, plodding, failing. What's happy in that?"

"He has his Art." I never could resist pronouncing that word with a capital A to those two. This time it had the effect of arousing Ralph.

"Yes, he has his art," he said, "and that's just the most pathetic thing

about Milman. You know that as well as we do, Brent. A man who is a failure because he hasn't it in him to be anything else isn't pathetic; he's too commonplace to be pathetic. It's the fellow who could succeed, the one you *know* could succeed, the one everybody has expected to succeed, and who somehow or other misses it—that's the chap that's likely to draw the tears to your eyes. And that," he added, after a pause that our pipes helped to fill, "is what's the matter with poor old Milman."

"Now there's that 'Helen in Argos' picture," said Pleasants presently, while his fingers were somehow making a splotch of blue into a shadow that you could see through. "He showed me his sketches for it, and I saw it four or five times while he was working on it. Gad, he did work on it, too! Put every effort a man could into that picture. The conception of it was big, big! It went along all right until—well, until it didn't. One time I saw it and I thought it would be the making of him; the next time—it was just like everything else he had done. Helen—Lord, she was a corpse! The committee didn't look at the thing twice."

"I remember," said Wilson. "It was after that failure that he began to give lessons in china painting. I never shall forget the day I walked into his studio and found it half full of girls and women—and old Milman's face!" The memory was too much for Ralph's patience; he stood up and began to kick at the leaves and pine needles under his feet.

"And yet he has it in him. I *know* he has it in him. His color is good; his line is as sure as yours, Pleasants. Everything he does shows his technique—and everything he does lacks the something, the touch of life, whatever it is that makes a good statue look living and breathing and a bad one look like a tombstone."

Here my own sympathies went out to Milman in another direction. "And the way he lives," I said. "Sleeps on a couch in his studio, and gets his meals in eating houses. I dare say they're

of the kind where the tablecloths are chronically stained with coffee, too."

"I know it," said Pleasants. "And it isn't because he's not had an opportunity to live differently, either. You know he has a little income from some trust or other, enough to keep him from going naked or hungry. Some men I know were going into a sort of coöperative housekeeping plan, and they asked Milman to join. Of course"—Pleasants's scheme of life had so lately widened—"of course it wasn't like a real home, but it would have been a great deal better than anything we've ever known him to have."

"What was the matter?" I asked. "Why didn't he go in for it?"

"Oh," and Pleasants shrugged; "said he was afraid of the responsibility."

"That's just what it is," cried Ralph, and emphasized with a waving fist. "That's where it all comes from, all his failure. He goes along so far, and suddenly his nerve goes; things get too big for him; he becomes afraid, as he said, 'afraid of the responsibility.' Just imagine being afraid of the prize you can almost touch! That must hurt, you know."

"Yet he has plenty of courage of another sort," I said. "I saw him go overboard at night after a half-tipsy man who tumbled from a ferryboat; it was just a miracle that they got picked up. I tell you, I thought that was the last of old Milman; I thought it was a fool thing to do. I remember that the man was less shaky than Milman when we got them aboard, and cursed at Milman for having torn his collar off. Milman laughed. I don't know any other man who could laugh that soon after a dip in the North River—ugh!"

Later, as we were walking back to the house, Ralph said—he loved to turn character inside out, to see what it was made of—"I wonder what women there have been in Milman's life?"

"None," said Pleasants quickly. We both looked at him. "No, none—barring his mother and his female relatives. I know, because he told me so,

himself, in a way that meant he was telling the truth."

"I don't believe he ever told anything else," I said, "except in one of his yarns."

"Neither do I," agreed Pleasants, "and this time I am absolutely sure of its being true. You see, I was telling him about—about Miss Foster, and he said: 'Well, Jimmy, I don't know the lady, but I know you're lucky, just the same. I reckon I'm ten years older than you, but I tell you the truth—I've never held a woman in my arms. It has never seemed to me worth while, you know, unless I could feel that she was mine, my own.' I said: 'Then why not marry, Milman?' He said he had never seen the time when he felt that he, a failure, had a right to take upon himself so much responsibility; there it was again!"

"Jove," said Ralph, "a man must love his art with a mighty love when he can go on working at it, knowing all the time that he cannot get either money or fame out of it, but only the mere doing of it—and, even then, not doing it well! I swear it's more than I could do! I'm not as fond of the writing of plays," and he looked at the pretty cottage in its garden, through which his wife was coming to meet us, "as I am of all this. If the dr-r-r-rama couldn't give it to me, I'd do something else that could; I'd go into partnership with you, Brent!"

He laughed, and Mrs. Wilson, having come within hearing distance in time to catch the last sentence, looked at me and laughed, too.

"You may well laugh, Ralph! I don't think Mr. Brent would find it amusing if you *did* go into partnership with him! He'd ruin anybody," she explained to us all. "I have just discovered a hundred new rose bushes hidden away in the stable, and we haven't room for one more! I suppose he's going to dig up the ones we planted last fall and throw them away!"

"Well, and if I am?" laughed Wilson.

"I love the old ones! I don't want them touched!" said his wife.



"Oh, let's try the others, Bess," Ralph pleaded.

"But I love the old ones."

Wilson turned to Pleasants. "This is the sort of thing you're taking upon yourself, Pleasants," he said.

At the luncheon table Wilson offered to compromise the matter of the roses. "I'll plant those roses somewhere else, Bess," he said, "if you'll invite old Milman up here."

Mrs. Wilson exclaimed: "Well, of all the curious coincidences! Whatever made you think of *him*?"

"Why shouldn't I, please?"

"Why, I heard from him this morning. No," she added, seeing our amazement, "I don't mean from him directly, but about him. Did you know he had a summer school—or an attempt at one—at White Harbor? Ethel Macneill has a cottage there, you know, and she writes that Mr. Milman had a school there, but only two pupils came, and he had to close it. She says he is still in the cottage he took for the summer, and she invites him to dinner as often as she can find an excuse. She likes him tremendously, and so does Bob, and Bob says if Mr. Milman had advertised his school more, he is sure he would have had more pupils; but I suppose he was afraid to put in any more money. What on earth made you think of him so soon after I got that letter, Ralph?"

But Ralph was not to be tempted into any psychological investigation. "Well, will you ask him up here for a while, Bess?" he begged. "Pleasants and Brent are old friends of his, too, you know."

"Yes, of course, I will." Mrs. Wilson made a point of liking all her husband's friends, and it is only just to her to add that they, in return, liked her, even to the point of feeling at home with her. "I like Mr. Milman." Then her face clouded a little.

"Now what's wrong?" asked her husband.

"Nothing," she said, "nothing at all. Only—only the Wesleys are coming next week, you know."

Wilson laughed with his genial roar, and I, who knew the people and Mrs. Wilson's ways, laughed, too.

"Oh, I say, Bess," cried Ralph, shaking his head at her, "how you do scent the battle from afar! But this time you're 'way off! Milman isn't a marrying man."

"That has nothing whatever to do with it," said his wife with spirit.

"Who are they, Mrs. Wilson, may I ask?" said Pleasants.

"Mrs. Wesley is my aunt, Mr. Pleasants, and they are good people, awfully good—" Her voice trailed off into expressive vagueness. Ralph chuckled. "Well, they *are* good, Ralph," she protested. Then to Pleasants and me: "Ralph said I shouldn't have them up here, because they are."

"Now, Bess," declared Wilson, "that's not so! I don't object to their goodness."

"Well, no," she admitted, "I didn't mean just that. But it is the effect of their goodness that Ralph cannot stand." She was bound to explain directly to us and to ignore Ralph. "In fact, I didn't dare tell him I had invited them until you two had been here a day or so. That's one of the things I love you both for," she laughed. "I can do anything with Ralph when you're around."

"Well, Mr. Milman will not flirt with them, Mrs. Wilson," I assured her. "He's proof against even such prettiness as Miss Nellie's."

Mrs. Wilson looked directly at me, as if wishing to convey more than she spoke. "Faith and her little boy are coming, too," she said.

"Evidently she's afraid the grass widow may pierce Milman's armor," said Wilson.

"Oh, don't, Ralph; don't talk about it in that way," she protested.

"Then she has her divorce?" I asked. I remembered the case very well. The girl was young, too young, almost, to have been married at all. A man like Greaves was just the one to attract her; she had been brought up in the strictest kind of way by the strictest kind of parents, who knew as little of

the world and of men as the girl herself did. They believed in love matches, and the man had carried her through as many kinds of sorrow and shame as four or five years could very well hold. The young wife went back to her parents; no one knew where Greaves was.

"Divorce?" repeated Mrs. Wilson. "Gracious, no! She will never get a divorce! They don't believe in divorce, you know. I think they would rather see her back with Greaves than divorced from him. The very word spells shame and disgrace and all the blackest of sins to the Wesleys!"

"Well, but what's wrong with the Milman combination?" I persisted.

"Oh, nothing, nothing at all. It is only that I thought perhaps I ought to have another sort of man for Nellie; and then, too, I don't think Aunt Minna would exactly appreciate Mr. Milman's kind."

"He's a mighty good kind, Bess," said her husband.

"Oh, I know that," she hastened to declare. "But anything suggesting—well—what used to be called 'Bohemian,' would be suggesting all sorts of evil to the Wesleys, and you know what Aunt Minna is, Ralph."

Milman and the Wesleys arrived within a few days, however, and to Mrs. Wilson's satisfaction Aunt Minna, far from disapproving of Milman as an artist and a man who had approached middle age without fitting himself with the safeguard of marriage, took to him immensely. Ralph expressed it as his opinion that the old lady was trying to save a brand from the burning, but Pleasants and I were sure that she had come under the charm that Milman had for everybody. Milman, for his part, assured us that Mrs. Wesley reminded him of what his mother would have been if she hadn't died when he was a very young man, and from what he said then we learned more of his early life than any of us had ever known before. It seems that the *ménage* of Milman *père* was not very unlike that of the Wesleys themselves; it was of the strictest, and the mother, so it seemed to her son, fairly suffered under

the stern righteousness of the father, under his harsh treatment of her children, under his miserly watchfulness over household affairs. It suggested itself to me, and I found afterward that Wilson so interpreted it also, that Milman's fear of assuming domestic responsibility was probably due to his early experience of what such responsibility might mean. At any rate, to Milman the ideas of the Wesleys seemed to make an instant appeal, and they evidently liked him as well.

I remember the first time he asked us about young Mrs. Greaves; with his painting things over his shoulder and Mrs. Greaves's little boy beside him he had come through the woods to where Pleasants had set up his kit. As the child played around us in unconscious happiness, Milman listened to Wilson with eyes which did not see the colors with which he was fuddling.

"Well," he said at length, "they are right. You can't make divorce right."

The rest of us were surprised.

"But without divorce that brute has his right to her and the child, too," said Pleasants.

"I suppose it would seem right in this one case," said Milman, still thoughtfully, "and possibly in many other cases; but that doesn't make divorce itself, the principle, right."

The little boy was building a miniature Versailles at his feet, and Milman stooped to help him lay out a lake of sand. When he rose his face was flushed; he added: "Besides, she will never go back to him, never."

We were all silent for a moment; a strange, indefinable feeling of discomfort was among us; no one looked at another. Wilson presently spoke, and there was effort in his voice.

"No," he said, "I don't think she will. She certainly looks as though she would not go back to anything for very long, poor little woman."

I went to England to meet my wife and her mother, and was very busy after I came back, so that I saw little of the Wilsons or of the Pleasantses, and nothing at all of Milman, until the winter was well advanced. We went to

see Pleasants married in January, and it was somewhere about that time that my wife told me about Mrs. Greaves. Mrs. Wesley had become paralyzed, and it was necessary that Miss Nellie should be in constant attendance upon her; at about the same time the doctor told Mrs. Greaves that if she wished to prolong her life it was absolutely imperative that she should winter in the Adirondacks.

"And you know, Dan," my wife added, "they simply haven't money enough. It does seem as if that poor little woman has had just everything, doesn't it?"

With the inevitable coincidence, having heard something about Mrs. Greaves one day, I met Wilson at the club the next afternoon, and he had still more to tell. He said that all my wife had heard was true, and that Greaves had come back and was trying to get the boy. The child's mother had sent him for protection to Mrs. Wilson, and Ralph said Milman came there every day to take the little chap to the park to see the squirrels.

"Milman!" I exclaimed. I had not foreseen Milman in that character. Then Ralph looked at me in the most curious way, and exploded his bomb-shell of news.

"Yes, Milman," he said. "You remember Milman's attitude on the question of divorce, last summer; how he so fully agreed with the Wesleys on the subject? Well, Mrs. Wesley has not changed; but Faith hopes to get her divorce within the month, and Milman plans to marry her at our house, and to go with her and the boy directly to the Adirondacks."

In my amazement there was absolutely nothing I could say. I remembered Milman's fear of responsibility; I remembered his remarks upon divorce; I remembered his life of almost timid retirement; I remembered his failures. Now he was to take upon himself the care of a helpless woman and her child; he was to do so in opposition to the beliefs of her family, and even, to a great extent, of her world—it was too much for me. I do

not remember what I said; it could not have had much sense in it.

We all wanted to go to the wedding, my wife, the Pleasants and I, but Milman, pleased though he showed himself to be, declared that the excitement would be too much for Faith. Later, Wilson, who never missed the fine shades, told us that her face was the most pathetic he had ever seen; she looked frightened, miserably frightened, and ill, so ill that his wife feared she would not live to reach the mountains. Milman, he said, was very quiet, and watched Faith constantly. He thought Milman might well have been the one to look frightened, but he said that, instead, there was an absolute unconsciousness in his face that was "a wonder." We had to be content to leave the affair in that vague condition.

We heard that Mrs. Milman reached the mountains alive, and within a few weeks was walking through the woods with her husband and the boy, quite strongly; after that I heard nothing at all for a long time, for we went to London on a business trip that promised to be of only a few months, and extended itself into nearly three years.

Before the end of that time, however, we began to hear Milman's name here and there. Someone sent us a Sunday paper in which a page was given over to a description of a picture of his that the richest of our millionaires had bought at a recent exhibition, and the paper described three or four other pictures of Milman's for which comfortable prices had been paid. Wilson and Pleasants both wrote of his work, and in answer to a question Ralph said that they still lived in the Adirondacks, where Milman had built a pretty house, and that Mrs. Milman had never left there since the day after their marriage. Pleasants wrote of Milman's old charm in a most affectionate way, and of the pictures in a way too technical for me to understand, but with such enthusiasm that I knew old Milman must have really, in some way or other, hit it off.

It was spring when we at last got

back to New York, and we had not been in town a week when Pleasants took me up to see Milman's latest picture. It was on exhibition in a shop on the Avenue, and the evening papers were trying to find out whether the same millionaire had bought it, or whether it was destined for the Museum.

"The Museum ought to have it," said Pleasants, as we went upstairs. It seemed very strange to me, and also very good, to be going into this place to see a successful picture by our good old Milman; I felt my heart warming toward him, and was conscious of a longing to take him by the hand and give it a hearty pumping.

When we got into the farther room, the sort of *sanctum sanctorum* where the picture was shown, I forgot all about Milman himself. The large canvas was hung with all the proper surroundings of color, fabric, lights and frame, and it was the only one in the room. Had there been many others, however, it must have been the first among them, the one to which every eye would have turned, and which everyone would have remembered longest. Pleasants had told me what it was called, but it did not need to be labeled with a title. "Our Lady of the Snow"—it suggested itself at once. The woods were the pines of the forest of healing; the light came through them, from a pale yellowish sunset, upon the snow. Walking over the untrodden whiteness that glowed with reflected color and was still white, coming out of the picture, was a woman with uplifted, happy face, and by her hand she led a little child. The child was dragging back, stooping in his effort to pluck some twig or empty seed pod, so that his face was not seen. The woman's dress was of gray, and something white was over her head and about her throat; the costume was puritanically simple. It might have been a picture of Hester Prynne, in dress and attitude and the lonely surroundings, but that there was no touch of scarlet upon this woman, and that in her face was such radiance, such a glory, as I

have never seen elsewhere on canvas. The cold sunset, the lights and shadows on snow and trees, the little stooping figure of the child, the poise of the mother, her serene carriage and her happy, beautiful, uplifted face, even the very atmosphere—all gave the beholder a thrill of life. Even the slim fragility of the woman was lost at first glance, so full of the great rhythm was the painted figure. The canvas glowed with life, life! It was a portrait of Faith, his wife, and Milman had painted the look that a man sees sometimes.

Neither Pleasants nor I said a word until we were in the street again. A man does not want to talk when his emotions are deeply touched. Then, presently, Pleasants said, as if continuing a conversation:

"When Milman was down a few weeks ago, he had the little boy with him, and was making arrangements to adopt him, and give him his name. Yes," he added, in answer to my look of inquiry, "yes, Greaves is safely dead. One evening Milman and Wilson and I were talking over the week at the Firs, and Milman said: 'Look here, you two; I don't want you to think that my marriage has seemed to me to alter in any way the right and wrong of divorce; I haven't changed my opinion on that. We had—or I had—to do it. It was the only thing for Faith, and as for myself—well, I came to the place where I felt that a man has a right to responsibility. I can't argue it out, for I know it won't stand argument. But it doesn't have to. Faith is happy; and I—well, it's just in that: a man has a right to responsibility.'"

"And by Jove, Brent," exclaimed Pleasants with an air and tone of finality, "he was right! Look at his work, look at the whole thing! I don't mean the woman's part of it; she is living and happy, but that really has nothing to do with it. You remember the sort of work Milman used to turn out, the life he droned along in, all his failures; and then think of that picture we've just seen! What's the reason of it? I tell you, Milman struck it. A man *has* a right to responsibility."

# AN OLD SPINNING WHEEL

By CLINTON SCOLLARD

**I**N the dim long ago,  
Days of bepowdered beau,  
One whose sweet ways I know,  
Must have been winning,  
By this old spinning wheel,  
With an untiring zeal,  
Hour upon hour, I feel,  
Used to sit spinning.

In some low-ceilinged room,  
Filled with a faint perfume,  
Lavender, briar bloom,  
There would she kindle  
Day dreams within her heart,  
(Love ever bore a part!)  
While she, with gentle art,  
Guided the spindle.

Sometimes the busy one  
Caroled the while she spun,  
Like a bird in the sun,  
Out of sheer gladness;  
Sometimes the song would die  
To a low lullaby,  
Or to a plaintive sigh  
Poignant with sadness.

Life's joy and woe, the sum,  
Once was breathed to your hum!  
Old wheel, I shall become  
Sadly rheumatic  
If I stay longer. No,  
See how the sun droops low!  
Sooth, it is time to go  
Down from the attic!



**I**N marriage he who hesitates—is bossed.

# FORD'S CHANCE

By NEWTON A. FUESSLE

"FORD!"

In the local room of the great newspaper, one of the many typewriters paused in its clattering, midway through a sentence; the body of one of the reporters straightened with a snap, and his face turned visibly paler, as he made his way toward the city editor's room.

Inside the doorway Ford halted, waiting for Harper, the city editor, to speak. The reporter was tall and thin; there was something gaunt, something singularly nervous about his otherwise handsome face. It was partly hunger—had one known; partly fatigue after the day's driving work, and partly fear that the sudden summons presaged a withering reprimand, perhaps discharge.

"Ford!" came ripping in a half-snarl from Harper's lips again.

"Yes, sir," answered the reporter steadily.

"When I call you, why don't you answer?" muttered Harper, becoming aware that the other stood at his elbow, and transfixing the younger man with a look from his spectacled eyes as cold as the driving sleet.

Ford made no reply. His fortnight's work on the great newspaper had taught him obedience, the first rule of this game of his, the hardest and most exacting game in the world, the fiercest profession of all times, hotter than war, colder than groping on Arctic searches through unmapped wastes.

Harper lifted a sheet of paper out of the chaos of his desk, jerked out half a dozen curt, staccato sentences and reached for a galley proof which a lad,

shuffling in, had handed him. Then, as Ford turned on his heel, Harper added sharply: "Get her picture if you have to knock someone in the head. Make her say something hot. This story's got to be smeared. And for God's sake get in early."

Ford seized his hat and overcoat, and a minute later flung out of the corridor of the building into the street. The city smote him with the blinding light from thousands of globes scintillating before theaters, cafés and stores, with the roar which never ceases, but only becomes differently intoned at night. The reporter darted defiantly in the direction of a passing street car, grasped the brass rod, swung aboard and watched the city streets slip past as the motorman ahead clanged shrill warnings at the passers-by. Through the brilliant downtown district droned the car, whirled across the bridge span of the silent river and dashed into the region of cheap saloons and lodging houses bordering the dark streets of the gloomier West Side. Here the sidewalks were dotted with restless figures pacing through the cold of the early evening, and occasionally there were larger groups moving together, as if in packs for warmth. At length Ford swung off the car, to walk rapidly toward the great mansions of the wealthy, which lined a neighboring boulevard.

Tonight was Ford's chance. He knew it as he had never known anything else in his life. After a fortnight's patient, almost despairing, efforts with unimportant assignments, here at last was a big story. If he "made good," a regular job on the



staff was assured. If he "fell down," it meant certain discharge. The latter meant hunger, possibly a futile fight to remain in the city, then the disgrace of having to write home for money enough to get back to the little paper in the Iowa town where he had been a reporter for the past two years, and the maddening "I told you so" of those who had laughed at his resolve to break into the bigger game in the city.

Ford's jaw hardened into place as he strode in the direction of the Van Dooser home. Van Dooser, superintendent of motive power of a great railroad, inventor of certain devices, machinery and cars which had had a revolutionizing effect on railroading, was about to be sued for divorce by his wife, once known as the most brilliant débutante of a particularly brilliant Washington season. The charges were sensational, according to an exclusive tip in possession of Ford's newspaper. The divorce suit, which would startle the Court House reporters of the afternoon papers on the morrow, which would strike at the very heart of the highest social set of the city, had been presaged by never a rumor of trouble in the wealthy household, and would flash with the suddenness of lightning.

"Make her tell you what Van Dooser's been doing," had been the brief and brutal command of Harper, the man at the "city desk," whose soul was bloodless, whose heart was as icy as his eye, whose iron hand had long been at the throttle of an inhuman machine, under whose merciless rule only those reporters ever endured who were as brutal as he, who could master the trick of sensational writing, who could drill to the very heart of human interest stories, who could lay bare the soul.

Ford knew but little of the art of "getting" a difficult story of the metropolitan kind. And the Van Dooser divorce assignment was one before which the most hardened and skillful news-gatherer might legitimately have quailed.

As young Ford walked on he little suspected that, back in that hive of

buzzing typewriters, the man at the local desk was projecting every ounce of that psychic force which great city editors possess, in surging mental waves at the reporter of unknown caliber whom he had been obliged to assign to the important story. When the first information had come to the office, the city editor was in a desperate way. Allen, the greatest star of the newspaper firmament, to whom the story might have gone, was ill. Bliss was a hundred miles away on a murder mystery. Grant and Fetzger, fiends for accuracy, and brilliant writers, were bending every effort to unravel the biggest smuggling affair in years, which had just "broken." Kid Clarke, who had flamed into a star in six months' time, was drunk and hopeless. The rest were inextricably entangled in the details of important stories and could not be disturbed. Something in the eye, in the demeanor, of young Ford, something which a newspaper chieftain perceives by instinct, had prompted Harper, in his desperate plight, to give the untried youth his chance tonight.

Ford hurled himself up the front steps of the Van Dooser mansion, rang and waited, white about the face and steeling himself for the heartless task which the lean-souled man had sent him on. Perhaps, as he paused in front of the closed door, the thought ripped through his mind that Harper had taken a gambling chance by ordering an unknown, untested youth into this hazardous mission, for suddenly a wave of supreme determination ran through his frame. Ford straightened with a jerk, and a small, hard smile appeared on his face. In a moment the electric globe above him flashed and plunged him into light; footsteps sounded in the hallway within and the door swung open.

"I should like to see Mrs. Van Dooser," said Ford to the butler.

"Your card, sir."

"Just tell her it's a reporter, if you please," replied the youth.

The man swung on his heel, returned presently and bade the younger man be

seated. Ford crossed the softly carpeted floor of the drawing-room without realizing the rare luck which somehow had vouchsafed him entrance into the mansion, took an idle inventory of the room's rich furnishings, its lazy divans, its heavy bronze andirons, its wonderful hangings, its costly paintings, and then in utter idleness he picked up a copy of a magazine which lay on the table near his elbow and fell absently to turning the leaves. Suddenly a familiar name caught his eye. It was the name of the woman he had been sent to interview—"Elizabeth Porter Van Dooser." She was the author of a story in the magazine. A glance at the cover told him that it had been published five years before. But hardly had he begun to read the story when a lady entered the room. He rose quickly, replacing the magazine on the table.

She was tall and beautiful, a Juno type of woman, with considerable of the psychic slumbering in her blue-gray eyes. The gown she wore shimmered softly in the light of the room. Beauty flowed like a wave from this woman's being. A mesmeric something was creeping upon this boy from the provinces, and he trembled in her presence. She was the most beautiful being he had ever beheld.

"Mrs. Van Dooser?" he inquired.

"Yes," she assented questioningly.

He replied, giving his name and the name of his newspaper.

"Yes," she repeated in a tone a degree colder.

"I want to apologize for the nature of the mission which brings me," he added, seeking to soften the blunt brutality of the words to follow. "I'd like to ask about the divorce proceedings you are about to bring against Mr. Van Dooser."

She eyed him calmly, boring with her gaze to the bottom of his soul. Mrs. Van Dooser was a woman of the world, born with poise and intuition. She knew more about this game of Ford's than Ford was destined to learn in years. She read her questioner with deadly accuracy. She knew this game

of reporting for a great daily; she had clashed with the keenest, most merciless, most inhuman interviewers of many cities, and of Ford she felt no fear.

"You need not have come," she responded, yet seemingly in no wise angered by the reporter's question. "There is nothing whatever to say."

"But the charges— Surely there is something you can say about the charges—now—since they will be public as soon as the papers are filed tomorrow," Ford jerked out uneasily.

"No—there isn't anything; not a word," she replied in low, calm tones.

"It is most important," he persisted haltingly, "that I should get something—if only in general—I mean—"

A smile rose to Mrs. Van Dooser's lips. Hitherto she had been as cold as the diamonds which glittered on her hands. But a sudden whim had seized her. She began to talk.

"It's really amusing," she said, "the way you reporters demand information. You violate every law of business, every rule of give and take. You ask everything. You offer nothing. You do not even take the trouble to earn the information you desire by trick or deception. You are not 'game' at all."

There was a smile on the speaker's face when she had finished. To Ford it was withering—that smile, and scorched his manhood to the bottom. He sought words to answer her, but found none. Her stinging sarcasm left him utterly speechless. He knew nothing of woman, that strange, intricate being, of her moods, her whims.

"If the injustice of your methods were not so pathetic," she continued after a moment, "it would be amusing. Believing that a certain sorrow has come into my life, you come to me and ask me to produce it and place it on exhibition for all the world. Let me ask you a question. If I were to do as you demand, what would you think of me?"

"Forgive me," came from Ford's lips in hardly audible tones. He had no words in which to answer this im-

perious woman's arguments. He wanted only to get away, away from those boring blue-gray eyes, from that biting analysis of this game of his—this game which he himself so little understood, but which she seemed so thoroughly to comprehend.

She bowed acquiescently, a bit of a smile still upon her lips. And then a great change seemed suddenly to come over her. Somewhere within her something, which had held like a steel rivet, gave way, and little by little a hunted look came into her eyes. She was not a fighter by birth nor by training; and the veneer of the resolute, the shell of calm defiance, had broken, revealing underneath it a very womanly woman. She was hunted. The batteries of the newspapers had been trained upon her home. Somehow, her nerve was gone; and all that remained was to ask for quarter.

"Oh, why did you come?" she demanded wearily. "Why must the newspapers do this?"

A tremor had colored her last few words. And now, without warning, she sank into a chair—slowly, wearily, almost like a falling robe. Her cheek sank into one of her finely modeled hands. And now, seeming not to realize what she was doing, she said things which gave the youth a sudden startling glimpse of the raw suffering of her soul. She talked on in broken words, incomplete phrases, bits of sentences without endings. Nothing is more startling, more dramatic than the sudden revealing of that which has remained hidden beneath a haughty exterior. When that occurs, one's admiration of a proud, beautiful woman is wrung swiftly into a pity that cannot be measured.

Yet she said but little; and, indeed, five minutes later Ford had no recollection of what she had said. He knew only that a hunted look lay in her eyes, and that by some strange trick of woman's nature fate had made her say things which the mental "jimmy" of the shrewdest newspaper man on earth could not have elicited.

Suddenly she gave a start. It was

as though a tremor had passed icily through her frame. She rose, standing motionless for a moment, paralyzed by the startled consciousness that the trained strength of her will had gone down in utter defeat before her woman's instinct to cast into words those maddening emotions which clogged her soul. But now once more her eyes hardened into the temper of defiance, and she flung out biting words.

"You had no right to come—you—a reporter—to me!" she exclaimed.

Ford flushed hotly under her withering reprimand, and made no answer. She glided out of the room, leaving him standing alone in the drawing-room. His own eyes hardened into a frozen, pitiless gaze, as they followed the receding figure of this woman whose life lay blighted behind her.

Ford turned toward the door, and perceived upon the piano top a photograph, framed in gold—her photograph. A sudden impulse, a swift movement of the hand and he dropped the picture into the pocket of his coat. And then he was gone—with a little smile of triumph hardening his face. Chance alone had made him see the picture. Chance alone had made it possible for him to seize it the moment the forgotten words of Harper had flashed back into his mind—to get her picture if he had to "knock someone in the head." It must have been the hand of fate.

Again, a moment later, as he retraced his steps in the direction of the car line, overwhelmed by the ignominy of having failed in his mission, of having come away without ascertaining why the divorce was being sought, it was fate which made him recall, somehow, out of the depths of his subconscious memory, something he had long ago forgotten. It came back to him suddenly that years ago he had read in a magazine a tale which had gripped him strangely. It was a gloomy story of domestic strife, of a woman's despairing effort to adjust herself to a man utterly different, and written by one whose name, in some strange way, had remained somewhere in the folds of his

brain, whose name he had never seen in print before or since—the same story, the same name he had glanced at for a moment in the old magazine in the drawing-room he had just left.

The importance of his discovery did not occur to him immediately. But suddenly, as he cursed himself again for a fool for his inability to "make her talk," the significance of his discovery smote him and filled him electrically with the sense of the possibility of juggling the gloomy theme of the magazine tale into the sensation that his city editor would demand. Fired with sudden excitement, roused by the chance to drag victory out of defeat, he broke into a run. He dashed into a nearby drug store, snatched the receiver off its hook, and called up the city editor. He spoke rapidly for a minute.

Fifteen minutes later Ford bounded up the front steps of the public library building, darted into the department of bound volumes of periodicals, and a moment later was reading the story by Elizabeth Porter Van Dooser which chance had pointed out to him. It contained that which he sought—and more. For twenty minutes his pencil shot rapidly back and forth upon his paper, while his eyes fed ghoulishly, vulturelike, upon the mute, staring record before him, upon that buried flesh of the very heart.

Later, when Ford strode into the local room of his newspaper, thirty typewriters were smashing out the day's grist of the city's sensations. Young men, with sleeves uprolled and collars off, were hacking fiercely at their machines. But Ford, whose chance had come, paid no heed as he made his way to his desk, spread out his notes before him and began to click out the sentences of his "lead," slowly, with many pains, writing the best that was in him. He did not realize, presently, that an eager-faced man darted toward him and seized the gold-framed picture which Ford had laid on his desk at his side—for he saw nothing, heard nothing, only the story which his typewriter was weaving like a loom in

obedient response to his touch upon the keys. But after a moment he became aware that the city editor was talking to him.

"You've got the idea, Ford," came the words, seemingly from far away. "Put it up strong. Throw in your human interest, lots of it—the look in her eyes, how she acted and all that. I want detail—color and detail. You can let it run. Take as much space as you need." And, as Harper withdrew, the youth heard the words: "This is your chance, old man."

As Ford wrote on, the clatter round about him receded into a faint, far, humming drone. Sentence after sentence appeared upon the sheet in front of him. It was clean, brilliant copy, its words nicely shaded, full of meaning and color and tang, and image evoking. Ford knew he was writing well, knew it in his heart, in his soul. Yet the feeling of success at last gave never a hint of itself in his pale, tense face, which appeared inhuman, somehow, as words appeared, phrases were born and sentences were driven upon the sheet of paper which traveled back and forth before him—brutal, bloodless sentences, laying bare the heart of the woman into whose eyes had come the hunted look. Ford wrote on, neither seeing nor hearing that which was transpiring about him.

There was need of careful writing in this story, need of greatest caution, of prudence, of vigilance, for the specter of libel crouched at every turn. Yet as words, as phrases, as sentences sprang into place, there was no sacrificing of strength in the story. Into it the reporter was weaving telling questions, strands of pointed suggestion, meant to convey the impression that in those pages disguised as fiction lay the true story of the hidden woes of the railroad man's wife.

Ford's typewriter, drumming as steadily as an automaton, was picturing the interview of the Van Dooser drawing-room, the shimmering gown, the dry blue eyes, the wonderful beauty that seemed to flow like a wave from all the lovely creature's being. Then

he told of the look which had drifted into her eyes, and how she had collapsed into a chair. Then appeared on the typewritten page the theme of her published story, which had to do with the impassable gulf that yawned between the wife in the story and her husband, an inventor, whose mind was engulfed in mechanics and its mysteries, whose wife came at length to shrink in fear and latterly in hate from that which was alienating her husband, a force with which, not knowing or understanding it, she could not cope. And at last it had come to pass that the wife had become to her husband the only disturbing element in this world of his of perplexing problems in force and resistance, speed and friction, and wringing theories into facts. Every triumph in his determined toil had drawn him farther and farther from the woman he had married, while she, in her uncomprehending woe, had grown to tremble at the sight of his automobiles, his blueprints, the strange devices in his workroom, the gleaming models in his office and the forbidding sight of the shops, so huge, so mysterious, so tyrannical.

He told of her vain struggle to project herself into this alien world of her mate's, of his irritation and growing resentment, of the ever increasing distance between them, of the strife that was born at last, of the cruelty that followed. It was not the record of a very unusual experience. Yet, having flowed from the pen of the wife of the great man herself, the tale that Ford was reviewing was charged with strange power, with a deep and stinging pathos.

Seeing, understanding, divining, as he had never seen nor understood nor divined before, the youth wrote on. He was writing without heart, without soul, only with a mind whose machinery worked with greater clearness, with a fiercer accuracy than it had ever worked before. And all about him others were doing the same—inhuman minds, conscious of nothing save the notes on their pads, the steadily moving sheets of paper in their typewriters.

And near at hand were other hives of strange activity, where the same picture of life was repeating itself, where shirt-sleeved writers were preparing that which would feed the maw of the multitude on the morrow, the day's tale of business perfidy, marital strife and hideous misdeeds. And in the early hours of the day that would follow, an army of newsboys would swarm forth under the cover of twilight to hang the city's wash in every front yard!

At last Ford's story was written; the last sentence and word had leaped, letter by letter, upon the last of many sheets of paper; and he rose unsteadily, conscious at last of a leaden weariness of mind and body after his long day of nerve-racking, half-starved toil. He made his way to the tank of ice water, and drank glass after glass. The icy water roused him, made his senses alert, almost as a gulp of whisky would have done. Yet it made him more keenly conscious of the dragging weariness that gripped him. As he returned to the desk where he had worked, he could remember nothing of the story he had written. His mind was almost a blank, his thoughts fugitive.

He sank once more into his chair, picked up his pile of typewritten copy and, pencil in hand, began to read it for final corrections. He read slowly, critically, rousing himself with a tremendous effort into alertness of mind, indicating neglected paragraphs, respelling words, inserting commas and periods. Slowly, as he read on, he became aware that the story he was perusing seemed entirely strange to him, as strange as though he had never seen nor heard of it before, as though he had had nothing to do with its writing. He read on and on, forgetting to make corrections, thrilling strangely as he read. Copy readers have been known to swoon while reading graphic descriptions of hideous events written by skillful writers. And reporters, who have written brilliantly under the lash of alcohol in their blood, have been known sometimes not even to recog-

nize their stories in the printed column of the newspaper the next morning. And Ford, as he read feverishly through sentence after sentence of the copy he had just written, could not realize, somehow, that the story was his own.

On and on through the brutal sentences he read, until, when he was nearing the close, the blood was booming through his head and his whole being seemed to cry out against the unsparing picture the successive pages had drawn of the miserable, outraged woman. He forgot her withering reprimand. All that was good in him sprang up in sudden revolt. The typed pages before him blurred, while certain sentences which had clung in his memory kept tearing through his brain like bursts of canister.

Ford did not see Harper, the city editor, shirt-sleeved and disheveled, who paused at his side; did not see the cold, hard face bitten tonight by anxiety; did not hear him ask if the story were ready. And as Harper stood waiting for a reply, the reporter laid the pages together absently, and then, with a sudden, lightning movement, executed as fiercely as though he were attacking some living creature, he tore the pages in two and hurled the torn paper wildly from him into the air.

"God, man!" cried the city editor, startled at Ford's conduct. "What the hell are you doing?"

For the first time Ford cast his whitened face toward Harper, but gazed at him with eyes that saw nothing. He made no answer, but slowly and mechanically, like a man moving about in his sleep, he put on his coat and overcoat and hat and walked unsteadily out of the office, out of sight of his wondering associates, to emerge a minute later into the twinkling city, into the night.

Ford, having sacrificed the greatest story ever written by one of Harper's reporters, made his way through the city of the million lights toward the fourth-story room in his forbidding lodging house half a mile away. He

felt no remorse at what he had done, no regret that he had deliberately thrown away the chance which fate had cast at his feet. He would have done the same thing over again.

He climbed the stairs of his abode, touched a lighted match to the gas jet, and the dingy furniture, the ugly bedstead, the wretched chromos on the wall, the dirt-flecked mirror leaped miserably into sight. Then he became aware of a sheet of paper lying on his dresser. He knew the handwriting at once—his landlady's. Her note informed him that if his room rent were not paid by Saturday, she would have to ask him to leave. The rent was a fortnight overdue.

When he looked up he perceived that a white face, strangely drawn and pinched, confronted him. For a moment he did not realize that the face was his own reflected in the mirror. He studied it with a start—the sunken cheeks, the hollow eyes, the hardened line of the lips. And now something brought back the realization of a grinding, racking hunger. Since morning he had not eaten, and then nothing but a cup of poor coffee and several worse rolls. In a drawer of the dresser he found half a cracker, seized it and consumed it like a man who is starving.

He undressed, put out the light and sank upon his bed. And now, out of the darkened chamber where he lay, leaped pictures, fixing themselves one after another upon the retina of his mental vision. He saw the woman he had interviewed in her rich mansion, saw the soft, lazy divans, the costly hangings, the luminous oil paintings, the wondrous carpets underfoot. And, ah, somewhere in that house was a dining room! In it were the fats of her husband's pelf, foods in wasteful quantities, fruits which had been ripened into intoxicating sweetness by distant sunshines.

And now he fancied he saw the mistress of this house seated at her table. She was nibbling at this and at that. She was neurotic, without appetite, without hunger. Her lips played peevishly with costly drinks which had



oozed from mellow climates far away. Small talk flowed idly from her lips and from those of her companions, and then they rose, and the faint perfumes, stealing from their gowns, receded into another room. Candied hours these—for the mistress of this house!

And for her, for this creature of comfort and wealth, from whose lexicon of life had been stricken the words hunger and poverty in the hour of her birth, for her who had taken pains to impress him with her lofty station, he had sacrificed everything he possessed, his chance to succeed, his opportunity to work! And now, all of a sudden, now that it was too late, he knew that he hated her.

Ford cursed himself for a supreme fool, and swore an oath in his hardened heart that he would hammer his way back into the game of life he had deserted; that he would be true to its relentless rules, and win favor in the eyes of none other than Harper, the hardest and coldest city editor of all time.

For, he asked himself, what had he to do with those who dwelt in that other world, that world of riches, of the sweet, soft things of life, where shadows were never black but only the drab portions of life's fabric? What business had he to renounce that which was his by the right of his prowess, to scorn the chance which fate had flung toward him, to weaken in that fight for success which extended through yesterday, today and tomorrow, which had already raged on for centuries, which would never abate?

Reasoning thus, his feelings ground by despair and disappointment, the dark hours passed on. But Ford little

suspected what was transpiring back in that chaotic newspaper office. Harper, with a sneer on his lips, had stooped and picked up several of the fallen sheets of Ford's torn story. He had read them through, had picked up a few more, had read them. Suddenly the sneer faded from his lips and he swore. Then he yelled at one of the copy readers.

"This thing's a wonder!" he exclaimed. "Grab it and paste these sheets together!"

Harper dashed back into his office and presently the copy reader stood beside him again. Harper seized the pile of patched-up manuscript and read it page by page. When he had finished he murmured to himself: "The kid lost his nerve, and I—don't blame him, either."

A little later the greatest story Harper had ever handled had been rushed to the linotype room, and the machines, muttering and murmuring, were cajoling it into type with their metallic clicking. Half an hour later the giant presses were pounding and driving it into place on the front page of the great newspaper.

Before Harper closed his desk that night he paused to write a letter. It was to Ford, and read:

FORD:

Your insubordination last night is a thing this office will not tolerate. But, in consideration of your excellent work on the Van Dooser story, I shall put you on the staff regularly, commencing today.

HARPER.

On his way to an all-night café, Harper dropped the letter into a mail box.



**M**ASTERFUL men are finally mastered, because they fail to measure the staying power of woman.



**B**ETWEEN two evils, it is better to wed a talkative lobster than a self-satisfied clam.

# LOVE THE PEDDLER

By MRS. LEONARD MARSHALL

**U**NDER the shadows of the tall, stately pines by the Lake of Sorrow came a maiden idly dreaming.

The swallows whirled past, skimming the water with their wings, and the daisies gazed upon her as she trod the verdurous earth and closed their yellow eyes in sheer despair of ever seeing aught so beautiful again.

Love the Peddler came passing by, vending his wares, and met her on his way.

"Where now art thou going, thou beauteous child?" cried the maiden. "And what treasures hast thou here?"

Love gazed at her long, and she blushed the while she wondered why. "I come," said the boy, as he lifted his eyes to her glinting coronal of hair, "I come, oh, my Princess, from Joy and Sorrow. I go where none dreams of seeking me. I am welcome in castle and cottage, yet my path is strewn with tears of blood and red roses of passion. I come leading Joy by the hand, and hearts that have grown cold burn again with the sacred fires of their youth. I am the Magician; I am Eros, and at my bidding Sorrow, who follows in my footsteps, will vanish and the gates of Paradise open to the children of men." The smile deepened on the boy's cruel, curled lips, making more beautiful still the scarlet bow of his mouth.

"Lovely maiden, what wilt thou buy? Here are tears, crystal tears, which unwise men call diamonds. They come from eyes as pure and quite as cold as thine own. Wouldst thou a chaplet of warm, living pearls? Take them; thy sister woman bartered

her soul for such as these. A mask is not for thee; thou hast nothing to hide. None of these charms and love philters? Nay? Then, by my troth, I bring thee a royal gift. Seest thou this heart—pure gold, loyal, stanch—bleeding three tears of rarest rubies? Cherish it, treasure it, for it has suffered perchance for thee or such as thee—suffered that deepest of all sorrow, the world's sorrow, which is love!

"Art afraid? Here, then, is another, a frail bauble of lesser value, to outward semblance the same, but how hollow—how empty! Nay, thou art too sweet to be betrayed. Yet we shall seek some other golden toy, a flower. Oh, beware of *that* flower! It was grown under Eastern skies in Prince Suliman's garden. The beautiful Georgian who culled it was the Prince's favorite, but love, maiden mine, knows no law save the law of the heart, and the Georgian loved a stranger—a fair young Saxon, a man of war. Well, they had their golden hour. They drank the cup of happiness to the dregs, but the dregs were bitter, for the lover was flung down the marble steps of the palace, and the curly golden head her lips had so often kissed was severed at one blow by a jealous black guardian of the harem. The end of my story? Love stories have no end; they begin again. Mayhap the Georgian forgot her lover, and the favors lavished on her by her lord made her reconciled to her fate. Mayhap she remembered too long, and met her punishment in a cruel death, and then—who knows? For love is stronger than death, and passeth the

portals of the grave. Yes, love is immortal, and it were better for thee to suffer all things than have missed its joys supreme."

The face of the child was transfigured; it had grown suddenly old with the burthen of centuries of things seen and suffered.

In the girl's mind a mist was clearing away, as though the sun had risen and flooded the dark woods with radiant light. She saw the skies above her and the flowers at her feet as she had never seen them before. Life was life, thrilling her to her finger tips; and when she looked again Love had fallen to the ground and was weeping bitterly at her feet! "Maiden, I am world weary, and fain would I rest upon thy heart. No mother, no sister, no woman have I to shelter me from the cold, cruel world. No one needs my fairy wares now. The world craves

but gold, and I am left alone and desolate!"

In the maiden's heart the mother awoke. She took the child to her arms, and they lay down to sleep on a mossy bank. But Love never sleeps. Swift from his quiver sped an arrow aimed truly at her heart. When she awoke the shadows had lengthened on the river. Love the Peddler was gone, but Eros, in all the beauty of his youth, knelt beside her. Hand in hand they went into the solemn depths of the pine forest. The daisies nodded their sleepy heads and said, "It is well"; and the nightingale sang so sweetly to the lovers that the quivering aspens sobbed and declared never was there such a serenade heard in the forest within the memory of the oldest tree. When the whole world was laid at rest the moon rose in her splendor and Love kissed Psyche on the lips.



## ONE MISTY, MOISTY MORNING

By CLARE M. CARBERRY

ONE misty, moisty morn I met a maid of many moods;  
 Her hair was long and dank and wet,  
 Her wide gray eyes like jewels set  
 In cobweb fringes—Cupid's net;  
 One misty, moisty morning when the heart of nature broods.

She tripped beside me all the way by flower-haunted rills;  
 A laughing, weeping, mocking fay,  
 Who pelted me with blossoms gay,  
 And hummed a tuneful roundelay,  
 That misty, moisty morning when the clouds were on the hills.

I sought to catch and hold her, but she floated with the breeze.  
 Of my love I gently told her,  
 And my timid heart grew bolder,  
 But she turned me a cold shoulder  
 While her laughter shook the trees.  
 For the fickle lass was Springtime, who delights to lure and tease.

# THE ROAD OF REBELLION

By JEANETTE I. HELM

*Whoso treads the road of rebellion must never look back*

LISA was washing the dishes with an energy that had already cost one teacup its handle and boded ill for the noses of pitchers and the edges of glasses. It was not the energy of willingness, but the force of a badly leashed temper. There was revolt in each thump of a dish on the oilcloth of the table and in every clash of knife and fork. Occasionally she glanced from the tail of her eye to see if the audible protest was registered. The only other person there, however, paid no heed, but sat tilted back in his chair, smoking his pipe, and reading the *Daily Citizen* with after-dinner interest. Lisa frowned and clattered her dishes with even more vehemence.

She was tall and lithely built, with a free grace of outline that her blue checked apron could not wholly disguise. Her face was a blending of childlike immaturity and the wisdom of hard experience, and would have been attractive if it were not for the hard frown and rebelliously set lips. Her brown-gold hair waved over a flushed forehead, but was caught up in a hard knot behind that spoke of haste and lack of desire to please.

She set the dishes and plates on the dresser, poured out the water and hung up her towels with the same resentful vigor.

"Where's the water?" she demanded.

"What water?" said the man without looking up.

"The water for the baby's bath. She hasn't been washed yet; I ain't had time all forenoon."

"Wait a bit," he said placidly. "I've just filled my pipe and I want to finish this paper."

"And I want the water right now. You promised to fetch it."

"Did I? Well, I will when I'm ready."

Lisa's ill held wrath flamed out.

"Oh, yes," she jeered, "I'm to set down and wait, I suppose, until you're ready to get it! Suppose I'd told you that when you wanted your dinner? You'd have waited all right, I guess."

The man looked up. He was young and broad-shouldered, with a heavily molded face that, ordinarily, might have been pleasant, but now was only sullen.

"Oh, quit your nagging," he growled. "You've got to have something to chew over all the time. I'll fetch the water now, but I won't do it again for all your jawing."

He got up and stamped out, leaving Lisa glaring after him. When he came back she had brought the baby from the next room and was jerking off its clothes.

He set down the water, and, getting the little tub, filled it and stood watching, snapping his fingers at the child, which crowed in return.

"Look out!" he said, as Lisa jerked off the child's dress so roughly that it whimpered. "You'll scratch it with a pin."

"Can't you help, then?" snapped Lisa. "Suppose you're bossing the job as usual!"

His smiling face darkened again.

"I can do better than that, anyway," he sneered, and began to take off the baby's shoes and stockings, his care-

ful tenderness contrasting with Lisa's rough haste. She felt it, but it only angered her more, and when the child, conscious of the strong tension in the air, began to cry in real earnest, she turned on him fiercely.

"You hurt her pullin' off that shoe," she declared, although she herself felt the unjustness of the remark.

The two angry faces glared at each other over the wailing child.

"Give her to me," he said sternly.

"You ain't fit to touch her."

"An' you ain't fit to have a child, loafin' around here all day, doin' nothin' but smokin' that pipe and then tellin' me I hadn't oughter touch her."

The man's face was dark and ugly now. He said nothing, but reached out for the baby. Lisa sprang up, the child clasped to her breast.

"If you take her away—I'll—I'll kill you!" she hissed.

The scorching anger in her eyes dominated his own fierce rage in spite of himself.

"I think you're crazy," he said contemptuously. "Wish I'd thought twice before I married a scold like you."

"And I wish to God I'd 'a' thought twice before marryin' a lazy loafer," she returned, "that can't keep his wife from working herself to death."

"Yes, I can, too," he shouted, beside himself. Neither of them noticed the terrified child's screams in their own bitter controversy. "I've given you a home, as good as any, and handed over my money, every cent of it, on pay days."

"Yes, but pay days have been precious few," she sneered. "If I hadn't done washin' all this summer, where'd we have been?"

A dull red mounted to the man's temples.

"You know why I ain't been workin'," he said with ominous quietness. "'Tain't my fault I've been laid off at the works."

"Well, you could have helped me around the house instead of settin' there all day enjoyin' yourself. I didn't, when you was workin'."

"I did help," he protested. "I've

cut wood and brought water and—I dunno' what."

"And what's that? Here I'm workin' every minute from five until eight, and not gettin' any thanks or pay for it but to be called a naggin' scold. Not one day's holiday have I had since the baby was born, and you've been off to Odd Fellows' picnics and lodge meetin's any time you liked."

"You could 'a' gone on the picnic, too, only you wouldn't," he returned.

"And what 'ud I go in? My old blue muslin that's been washed so much that it's half white? It's ashamed of your wife you'd have been, George Chester!"

"Where's the pink gingham I bought you?" he demanded.

"In the paper, jest as it come from the store. I ain't had a minute to even set down and plan it, with cookin' and tendin' Lisbeth, and you know it."

He did know it, but the knowledge did not improve his temper. The average being, on finding himself ever so little in the wrong, usually proceeds to put himself in still deeper. George was not above the average, and went to work at his further bemiring with characteristic masculine tact.

"Some folks can do more with their time than others," he observed cuttingly. "Bess Haines does all the chores and goes out workin' three days in the week besides, and she's got all the duds and fixin's she likes."

Lisa's tow fired to his flame.

"Bess Haines spends all the money she gets on her back," she burst out. "And her children go about anyhow. How'd you like to see your wife in a gay dress and your baby bein' clothed by a neighbor's charity, George Chester? Besides, her husband can get work any time *he* wants."

He scowled at her murderously.

"Aw, quit that," he said. "I'm sick of it, I tell you."

"And I'm sick of it, too. I wish I'd known when I married what I was going to come to."

"I expect you'd rather have married a black devil of a gipsy," he sneered, "and gone tagging after him all day,

with a beating at the end for your pains."

Lisa's face went white and then aflame.

"I wish to God I had!" she cried. "I'd rather live with a gipsy than you."

His face was pale and rigid, too, but as her anger rose in fury his stilled to a white heat of flame.

"There's time yet," he drawled mockingly. "Why don't you go and find him?"

Lisa sprang to her feet with the sobbing child clasped to her breast. She jerked down a shawl and threw it across her shoulders, and with quick deftness twisted a yellow silk handkerchief over her hair. He watched her sullenly, but with a faint sense of alarm.

"Where are you going?" he asked, as she went toward the door and wrenched it open. She turned and her dark eyes, a heritage from some far-off gipsy strain, flashed bright and savage on him.

"Goin' to find the gipsy," she said, and darted out like a swallow escaping from a cage.

For a while he stood staring after her, divided between anger at her and a growing sense of shame. She would get tired of it soon enough, he told himself, and would come back. They had quarreled before, and once she had gone to a neighbor's for the night, but in the morning she had come back again. She was always going off in tantrums, but the words between them had never been so hot as this before. Of course she would come back! Anyway, he'd see any number of her kind farther before he went after her! He refilled and lighted his pipe and settled himself resolutely to read.

What fools women were, always nagging men into saying things they had not intended! He wouldn't have said that about the gipsy if she hadn't driven him to it. She must be crazy. He dropped the paper and sat up. Suppose she really had gone crazy and never came back! And she had the child with her, too! He hadn't thought of it before, and a sudden cold hand

seemed to clutch at his breath. There was no telling what she would do when she was angry. His ordinarily placid imagination leaped to images of horror he had not dreamed of before, and a cold sweat broke out over his strong, young body. It was now nearly an hour since she had left. He caught up his cap and hurried to the door. Then an idea caught and held him. Suppose she had only gone a little way down the road, and was watching to see how he took it and to laugh at his annoyance! But something in the memory of her gleaming eyes made him feel that she meant more than that, and with a sudden resolute lift of his shoulders he walked to the door. Halfway down the road he paused and let his clear, full shout of her name ring through the silence, but nothing answered him save the hum of the bees. The listening silence seemed to put an edge to the nameless fears that beset him, and pressing his elbows close to his side, he set off at a rapid pace down the dusty road.

Lisa sped along the narrow path with feet that were impelled by hate and winged with determination. She had instinctively chosen the woods instead of the highroad, and made her way through them regardless of her direction. She wanted only to get away from sound or sight of him, and their cool, dark silence held an invitation of oblivion.

At times the path dwindled to a mere trace; once a red fox slunk across her way, and once a huge, striped snake slid away almost from underneath her feet, but still she hurried on untiringly, pushing her way through the briars that caught at her skirts and clasping the child tightly to her breast. Outside it was very hot, but here there was only a tempered balminess, full of resinous, warm smells and vast silences, broken only by a squirrel's chatter or a cawing crow overhead.

She would have gone on much longer, but the child in her arms set up a hungry wail that none of Lisa's whispered soothings could still. At last she stopped, and sitting down on a stone,



loosened the shawl and laid the child on her knee. But the little one was hungry and frightened, and her cries at last woke Lisa from her reckless rage to a sense of reality. Here she was, she knew not where; night must come on soon, for already the sun was moving westward, and she had nothing to feed the child nor money to buy it with. She was near a brook, for she had followed its sound more by instinct than reason, and she dipped her handkerchief in the water and gave it to the child to suck. It drank greedily, but its thirst appeased only increased its hunger, and it set up a pitiful whimper that cut Lisa's heart. She gathered a few berries and gave them to the child, and then, picking it up again in her arms, sat rocking it back and forth until it fell asleep from sheer exhaustion.

Lisa sat very still for fear of waking the child, but her brain and senses seemed abnormally acute. The silence began to oppress her; the very solitude that had been so friendly now surrounded her like an implacable danger, and even the trees around her seemed whispering and treacherous. Would she and Lisbeth starve here together, and would George be sorry then that he had driven her out? Her healthy young mind rebelled against the thought of despair, and she rose to her feet again. She would not go back to him, but she would try to find the main road and walk into New Milford, where she had a married cousin. She was about to step forward, when the sound of a cracking branch, an unknown distance off, startled her. No light body, like a squirrel or a rabbit, had made that unmistakable sound; it was something heavier than either. There were bears up near the mountain, she knew, and George had shot a panther not very far from their clearing some months previous. Suppose one of these animals had strayed or been driven down by the forest fires? The thought sent tingles of fear through her. There were no trees near that were not too tall to climb, and the lower growths of birch and spruce afforded no shelter. She clutched the child and stood listening,

her entire senses concentrated on the act. Then, all at once, her limbs relaxed with a sudden thrill of relief, for from the path, still some distance off, came a man's voice, singing.

It was a deep voice, yet sweet and clear as a tenor's, and the song he sang seemed vaguely intelligible and familiar to her, though she could not understand a word, and the music was strange. But here was a human being at last; perhaps one of the lumbermen from the camp, who would, at least, tell her how to get out of the forest, now grown so menacing. And, with the thought, the man himself leaped lightly over a fallen tree trunk into sight and came down the path toward her, still singing.

As he drew near, she saw that he was not a lumberman nor a guide, though he wore the usual high, laced boots, and carried a rifle and a small pack on his shoulders. He was dressed in dark green corduroy, and the bright red tie knotted around the collar of his loose shirt made a brilliant contrast. None of the men around there ever dressed like that, and her eyes felt a sudden welcoming pleasure in the bright color she herself loved so well. He was tall and sinewy, and his face was a red-brown, like an Indian's, while from beneath his soft felt hat his hair showed a deep, lusterless black. But it was his eyes that caught and held hers—black, too, but steady and opaquely brilliant, like those of some wood animal.

As he saw her standing with the clasped child, her pose still keeping somewhat of the tenseness of her fright, he paused and spoke in a voice that was soft and deep, yet held all the clearness of his song:

"What is the trouble?"

He spoke without any apparent accent, but the articulation was different from anything she had heard: a musical prolonging of the words that was totally unlike the crisp, nasal voice of the countryside.

"I'm lost," said Lisa. "I tried to find the highroad and got mixed up in all these paths."

"Where did you come from?" he

asked, his keen, steady eyes upon her.

"Over yonder"—she jerked her head backward—"by Hillsdale."

"That is eight miles from here," said the man. "Did you walk all that way? It's a long distance back again."

"I'm not goin' back," said Lisa with angry emphasis. "I want to get to New Milford."

"You won't get there any sooner," he observed, a gleam of amusement in his eyes. "It's ten miles there by the shortest path, and that's through some bad going."

He used the expression easily, but there was a certain refinement in his voice that made the words seem different.

"I don't care," said Lisa defiantly. "I can walk it. I've done twenty miles at a time and never felt it."

"But never with a child," suggested the man, still with the same amusement in his eyes.

"Jest start me straight and I'll do it," said Lisa curtly. "That's all I want."

"I'm going that way. Come on," he said, and turned in an oblique direction to the way he had come, without even a backward glance to see whether she were following him or not. She stood a minute, irresolute. She had the confidence in mankind that the forest life had fostered. Any of the lumbermen, rough though they were, she knew she could trust, but there was something about this man that stirred a vague unrest and distrust coupled with a strange fascination. But little choice was left her if she would get out of the woods, and she turned and followed him. He walked on swiftly, finding his way unerringly, and betraying his knowledge of her following presence only by an occasional holding back of the crowding underbrush, or a halt to let her lagging footsteps catch up with his. They lagged more and more frequently, for the weight of the child and the fatigue of her wild running had told on her strength, but she set her teeth, and pushed on after his green-clad figure. At last, though he

had not looked back at her once, and could hardly have seen it, he turned quickly and caught her as she stumbled over a projecting root.

"Rest here," he said. "You are too tired to go on."

"But I must," gasped Lisa faintly.

He pushed her down as she would have gone on.

"Sit still."

The voice was so quietly authoritative that she obeyed instinctively. He unslung his pack and laid his rifle carefully on the pine-covered bank. Then he knelt down and unpacked a blanket, some cooking utensils and a small bag of flour. He took a short axe from the pocket of his coat, and in five minutes had cut up some dead limbs of cedar and made a crackling fire. From another compartment of the pack he brought out a loaf of bread, some salt pork and a can of condensed milk. Lisa watched him wearily as he heated the milk with water in a saucepan.

Then he took his rifle and disappeared into the shadow of the woods. She heard the double crack of his gun, and when he came back he carried a squirrel and a partridge. He skinned and prepared them with deft skill, setting a pot of coffee on the fire at the same time, where it soon sent out a delicious aroma. When the meal was cooked, they ate it together in silence, for Lisa was too famished to talk, and he did not seem inclined to speech.

When it was over, she turned to him.

"Let me help clean up," she said impulsively. "The baby's asleep now and I ain't tired to speak of."

"Sit down there and rest," he said quietly, and gathering up the tin cups and pans, went over toward the brook. She leaned back more comfortably against the tree, the sleeping child beside her, and watched his figure stooping over the brook. It was a new and pleasing sensation of being waited on, that her hard working life had little known.

The sun was dropping westward and sending long, level slants of light through the great pines, but she did not think of the future nor of the com-

ing night, but lay back drowsily content. The man came back shortly, threw himself down on the pine needles and lighted his pipe.

"Where were you running from?" he asked suddenly.

Lisa sat up with a quick rush of color. He was not looking at her, but at the filmy smoke from his pipe.

"Home," she answered laconically.

"Treat you badly?" he asked as briefly.

"Yes; we quarreled."

"Does he know you've gone?"

Her color deepened.

"He ought to. He told me to go."

Somehow, she felt no shame in telling this utter stranger her deepest secret, feeling in some way that he would understand and sympathize.

"Too bad," he said, and the words had the same lingering quality of caress.

"I'm never going back again." The words broke from her fiercely.

He looked over at her for a moment.

"How did you come to take to the woods?" he asked curiously as he caught her dark, tragic eyes.

"I dunno'. It seemed natural and more homelike. I was crazy mad, I guess."

"Though you may wander from me, I shall call you back at last," he murmured, as if to himself. "Were you born here?"

"No. I've lived in a town all my life 'cept for the last three years, but I like the woods."

"And wandering?" he suggested, relighting his pipe. "You must be part gipsy." His eyes were on his pipe, but they took in the yellow silk handkerchief fallen back from her tumbled hair and the bright, sudden red that stained her cheeks.

"That's what he said," she muttered. "And it's true; my mother's kin were—way back."

"Do you know of what tribe?" he asked, quickly rolling over so as to face her.

"I dunno'," she answered vaguely. "My mother didn't know, either. But I wish I was a gipsy and could go

wandering on forever and never come back again."

Her eager eyes met his, and a sudden color leaped again to her face. Lisbeth woke and stretched her hands to her mother. Lisa took her up, glad of a diversion, and fondled her.

"Let me take her," he said, and as Lisa hesitated, he leaned over and took the child from her arms. Much to Lisa's surprise, the baby went to him willingly and laughed as he tickled her cheek and spoke to her in his soft dialect. The contrast between the child's fairness and the man's strong, dark face was so marked that Lisa watched them in fascination. He looked over at her and laughed.

"Children all like me," he said lightly. "We have a saying: 'A woman, a dog and a child, all love a gipsy.'"

She clasped her hands across her knees and leaned forward, her eyes bright and shining.

"Oh, it must be heavenly," she cried, "to go where one pleases and do as one likes. I wish I were a man."

Her gipsy heritage was not far from her at that moment. All the years of city life routine and drudgery seemed to have slipped off like a stained garment and left the free, primal nature that some far-off blood had unconsciously bred. He looked at her steadily over the child's fair head, which was drooping drowsily against his arm. Suddenly he began to sing, but this time the words were English:

"The road lies straight before you, and none  
may say you nay,  
And none may call you back again when  
you have fared away;  
For by this only token my children do I  
know;  
When, sweet and clear, the Call they hear,  
they must arise and go."

"Yes, the road lies straight enough," said Lisa bitterly. "But a woman can't go on it; there's always something to hold her back."

"But you have started on it. Are you going back—to him?"

"I won't go back!" The words were hot with angry memory.

"Then you must go on."

The woods were very still with a

hush as of some great tension. Lisa had a sudden desperate feeling that some unknown force was but waiting the moment to whirl her away with it like a leaf on a tempest wind. She made a violent effort to hold back the fear and loneliness that gripped her with his words. She *must* go on, indeed; but where would it lead her? Unconsciously her lips formed the question.

"Where?"

He waved his hand toward the forest.

"On."

"But how?"

"With me!"

"With you?" She repeated the words mechanically, her eyes fastened on his, which gleamed now with a sudden brightness. He leaned forward still nearer and spoke quickly and steadily.

"Yes, with me—you and the child, both. I will take you with me away from this husband who drives you out of doors, who does not care for you. We are kin, you and I, by our gipsy blood, and the Call has come for both of us. Let us go together out there in the woods, where all the roads lie free before us and no one may hold us back. I will care for you and love you as you never have been before—that I swear. Will you come?"

His voice was deep, and vibrating with a feeling that made the words seem like some strange chant. He put out his hands and caught hers. The tempest was on Lisa, and nothing in her hard worked life rose up to give her stay at that moment. Here were love and tenderness, the freedom that she had craved all these years and never known; all these offered her. He was right; they *were* kin by the wild, free blood in both of them, that called her now with a force too strong to be resisted. She felt herself being carried away by his masterful eyes, but her only feeling was one of gladness in the surrender.

With the sensitive intuition of his race he read it in her eyes before she could speak, and with a sudden triumphant smile he caught her to him and

kissed her, murmuring caressing words in the strange tongue that was yet so vaguely familiar.

At that moment there was a cracking and snapping in the underbrush behind them, as some heavy body forced its way through. Without releasing her entirely, he caught up his gun in one hand and turned a watchful glance on the place from which the noise came. The bushes parted and a man burst through. It was George Chester, his clothes dust-grimed, his hair matted on his head and his eyes bloodshot with his haste and a fierce anger that surged into them at sight of the pair. He stopped, panting in great gasps that shook his whole body.

The man watched him coolly, and Lisa, too stupefied to speak, stood still also, staring at him. For one instant there was no sound except the cawing of the crows above them and the rustle of a sudden, quick wind in the branches of the pines.

"Lisa!" cried George in a half-strangled voice. "What are you doing here—with this man?"

It was the man himself who answered, for Lisa was still held speechless by a whirling storm of fear and shame.

"You are the husband, I suppose? Well, what do you want?"

"Want?" George choked with anger and put his hand to his throat. "I want my wife!"

"So you want your wife now, when, only a short time ago, you drove her from you. You are hardly consistent, my friend." His tone was full of a light, amused mockery that drove the other's anger to madness.

"What business is that of yours?" he roared. "I'll kill you for this!"

His furious rush was checked by the muzzle of the gun that the other dropped level with his face.

"If you move a step I'll blow you off the earth!"

There was no mistaking the sincerity of the statement. It reached even George's anger-maddened senses, and he stopped with a curse.

Lisa found her voice at last.

"Don't—oh, don't shoot him!"

The man dropped his arm from her and shot a keen glance at her frightened face. Then he lowered the gun, holding it in readiness.

"Listen," he said, "and don't move, or I'll keep my word. This is your wife by the laws of man and the world; she is mine by the laws of nature and kinship. You drove her from you and I have taken her, with her free will. But I will be fair with you, even though you hardly deserve it. In this wilderness a man is able to keep only if he can, to take if he is able. I shall put this gun over there and then meet you as man to man, and the better one shall win. Do you agree?"

"Yes," said George hoarsely.

The man glanced at Lisa.

"And you?" The caressing cadence softened the curtness of the words. For a moment she hesitated, then she nodded mutely.

"Very well." He laid the gun by the tree and threw off his coat. "Now, my friend."

The words were scarcely spoken before George rushed on him with a shout that was scarcely human. The other was ready for him, however, and they met with a shock that nearly overbalanced both. It was a struggle that had nothing of science, but was a mere primitive matching of brute strength. George was the more sturdily built, but he was exhausted by his long search, and the other's lithe agility more than equaled the odds of his furious anger. Up and down they battled, digging up the ground with their heels as they resisted each other's efforts, and trampling the ferns and wild flowers beneath their heavily shod feet, while Lisa clung breathlessly to the tree trunk, watching the struggle with wild eyes.

At last, by sheer strength, George bore his lighter antagonist toward the brook, hoping to push him backward down its incline and so gain the advantage. The other felt his intention, however, and instinctively avoiding a tree trunk, by a swift turn whirled him about and pressed him over it backward. George's heel caught in the

root of the tree and he crashed to the ground, the other on top of him. Even then the husband still struggled, though the man's knee on his chest and the muscular brown hands at his throat made it futile. Only when the grip tightened to a strangling hold that promised to fulfill the threat of the bright, coldly vengeful eyes that gleamed on him from the gipsy's face, did he lie still. Then the other suddenly slackened his grip and rose to his feet. Beyond a faint dilation of the nostrils, he gave no sign of the fierceness of the struggle. George, on the contrary, lay breathing in great gasps for several minutes before he could move, and when he got up at last he was obliged to steady himself against the tree.

"Well?" asked the man with a faintly triumphant smile. "Have I kept my word?"

"Yes." The word came from George like a tortured cry. "You've won her. Take her!" He turned with a sort of blind fury on his wife. "You can go along with him, do you hear?"

The gipsy turned to her, his cold eyes softened and darkened like sudden shadows on a lake. He held out his hand.

"Come, let us go," he said.

"No, no!"

The words burst violently from Lisa's frozen lips, and at their sound both men turned and stared at her.

She had watched the struggle between them with a shrinking exultation in the untamed passion that beat so in tune with her own pulses that had held her spellbound; but when she saw her husband fall to the ground a red mist that seemed to have enveloped her suddenly parted, leaving her faint and gasping on the edge of a great fear. What had she done? What was she going to do? Was it really she, Lisa, who only this morning had begun a day of drudging routine, who now was going to follow a strange man wherever he chose to lead? It was no moral training that held her back now, that had made her cry out that violent denial. She had traveled too far from

the normal by this time to be affected by its conventions. The sole cause of her sudden revulsion was the world-old mate instinct of loyalty. George was not only her husband but her mate, the father of her child, the man she had lived with and loved. As she saw him lie there, stunned and bruised, the hate and rage of the morning fell away and was succeeded by the mothering pity which is a part of every woman's love for every man. As for the other—as she had watched his tigerlike strength and met the sudden possession of his eyes, she felt again the increasing sense of fear that he had first given her. It was the reaction from revolt, the quick return of the pendulum that had been swung too violently to one way, but Lisa did not know it by any name. She knew only that she wanted George to forgive her, to take her back home with him, to let her work for him and serve him and to keep her from this wild, strange man who both frightened and fascinated her. She stretched her arms out toward him with an uncontrollable longing.

"Oh, George, George!"

He heard and understood, for the muscles of his set face relaxed, and his eyes met hers with a shamefaced longing, but he did not move. He, too, had swung from out his normal orbit, and was held only by the primitive law of might. He had given his word that he would abide by the issue. He had fought and been conquered; and, though it was his wife by law and honor who called him to take her, he stood motionless, held by the ancient law,

his eyes on the victor's face. So they stood silent for a moment, while the shadows crept lower over the trees, and only a squirrel's sudden scolding broke the stillness all about them. Then the gipsy turned to Lisa.

"You would go back with him?" he said, and his voice held only a calm curiosity.

She nodded, her eyes on George.

"Yes, you will go back with him. You have not the courage to win your freedom. You are mine by fair fight, but unless you come with me willingly there will be no freedom for either of us. But you have made your choice, and you will never hear the Call again. You have had your chance for freedom and thrown it from you. And now—"

He nodded carelessly to George.

"Take your wife, my friend."

There was no anger nor even contempt in his voice; but his smile was cool and fine, like a sharp-edged dagger, and tinged with a mocking amusement that grew as he watched George's impulsive step toward his wife, and Lisa's clasping arms about his neck. Then he swung the pack to his shoulders, picked up the gun and strode away down the path, singing, as he had come.

The two stood hand in hand, listening as the words came faintly back to them.

"Though from the ancient message the ancient joy has passed,  
Far though you wander from me, I shall call you back at last.  
For by this only token, my children do I know,  
When, faint and clear, the Call they hear,  
they must arise and go!"



## UNSELFISHNESS

**SHE**—Before we were married you said you would be willing to die for me.

**HE**—Yes, dearest; but that was before I realized that your loss would be my gain.



# APPALLING INFORMATION

By CAROLYN WELLS

## CALAMITOUS CATASTROPHE

DIRE DESTRUCTION AND DEPLORABLE DISASTER

DESOLATION AND DEVASTATION CAUSED BY AN APPALLING AIRQUAKE

THOUSANDS OF CASTLES IN THE AIR OVERTHROWN AND DEMOLISHED

*(From our own correspondent)*

**S**PAIN: A terrible airquake has wrought havoc in the densely populated atmosphere above this locality. Without a word of warning, noble and beautiful castles in the air went toppling to their ruin.

Though difficult to get details in these first hours of confusion and distress, it is known that the sumptuous air castle built by Claude Melnotte for the Lady of Lyons is entirely demolished. The devastated area is widespread, and from the most magnificent dream of marble halls to the humblest vision of love in a cottage, all of the *Chateaux en Espagne* have fallen. It is feared that many loves have been lost in the ruins. Even now the agents of the Love Insurance Company are on the spot estimating the casualties. Many of the survivors declare they will rebuild at the earliest possible moment. Indeed, it may safely be predicted that new and more elaborate and beautiful castles in the air will soon take the place of the old ones. Among the debris of ruined hopes and shattered ideals, pathetic sights may be seen. Here a broken resolution sticks up through the mass of fragments, there a broken promise; and everywhere are fallen idols and upset plans. The explorer is menaced by pits of boiling imagination and fine frenzies rolling. But relief supplies are already being received. A ship, with Youth at the helm and Pleasure at the prow, has just come into the harbor, bringing a cargo of fresh hopes and such stuff as dreams are made of.

Owing to the prevalence of mirage it is difficult to give definite statistics; but the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow is still visible, and the sanguine, light-hearted people have already begun to rear anew their castles in the air.



**N**O man is hopeless who can laugh at himself.

# THE WASHINGTON WAY

By SPENCER HARLEY

"**M**ARIA, you are such a fool!" The Ambassador looked over the top of his egg and sent this delightful little matutinal pleantry at his wife, who was apparently oblivious to everything except the letter she was reading.

Perhaps there was some excuse for His Excellency's temper. When an old gentleman who suffers from the gout and is made ill by hot rooms is kept out of his bed until four o'clock in the morning, because his wife insists on giving a ball for which she doesn't care a straw, but feels she must in order to pay off her social debts, it is not surprising that he comes to breakfast a few hours later with his nerves just a bit on edge. The night before, the Ambassador, in his own drawing-room, the most polished and delightful host, with two jeweled stars glistening on each breast and a broad ribbon across his wide expanse of shirt front, looked, as the aristocratic Mrs. Senator Hodge remarked, "a fine figure of a man, as sturdy as the mighty country he represents, bold without audacity." Mrs. Hodge didn't know exactly what she meant, nor did anybody else, but that made no difference. The man to whom she said it, the representative of a country where men are supposed to have "such a charming manner with women" and where every woman is "naughty," told Mrs. Hodge with his most impressive manner that she had just made an epigram—"a *vaire* brilliant epigram; *c'est très jolie, mais*—" but he didn't finish. No one ever does finish a sentence in Washington, except at the breakfast table in the bosom of one's own family. An-

other man came up to her. The diplomat sighed and then turned to pay his compliments to the prettiest debutante of the season.

"I have just made an epigram," said Mrs. Hodge, as proud of herself as if she had shot the only bear in the canebrake. But wild horses couldn't induce her to tell it to her cavalier. He must ask the Patagonian Ambassador. And the man with whom she was talking thought it was something very dreadful—he was a foreigner with a limited knowledge of English, and he wasn't quite sure that an epigram was a proper thing for a lady to make in a ballroom—and with as little delay as possible he hunted up his colleague. The Patagonian Ambassador had forgotten what Mrs. Hodge said, but he told the young secretary that it was very clever, and pretty soon half the people in the ballroom were talking about Mrs. Hodge's epigram.

"The most brilliant woman in Washington," said, with an air of finality, a rich man from her husband's State who was fishing for a White House invitation and knew the advisability of keeping in with the Senator.

"There's that awfully fascinating, frightfully clever Mrs. Hodge," said a young thing in white, filling in an awkward pause with her partner, whose eloquence stopped in his eyes when he looked at the girl's bare shoulders. "She has one bulky pink stocking," replied the attaché, whose acquaintance with the vernacular was strictly Ollen-dorffian.

The girl looked shocked and vigorously fanned herself. She giggled; then she laughed, just as loudly as a

very nicely brought up young lady may laugh in an embassy ballroom.

"Oh, you are just too cute for anything!" she said to her partner.

"'Cute'? What for a word is that 'cute'?" he asked.

"Oh, never mind that, but say, you mustn't talk about a lady's— Well," she added hastily, blushing in spite of herself, "what you meant to say was that Mrs. Hodge is a blue stocking. She isn't quite that, but she's the most ferociously—we girls have a crush on 'ferocious' just now," she added by way of explanation—"she's the most ferociously clever woman in Washington."

"So," the young attaché uttered with a long breath of admiration, "she is what you call a woman of one con-founded big head."

Thus are reputations made in Washington.

But if Mrs. Hodge had seen the Ambassador at breakfast she might have changed her opinion. His Excellency had not been shaved, and evidently he had dressed in a hurry, for there was a silk handkerchief about his neck where the night before there had been a collar; the immaculate dress suit, with its glistening stars, had given place to a shabby jacket; His Excellency's trousers had not been creased; His Excellency's gouty feet were encased in a pair of worn carpet slippers.

Her Excellency, the Ambassador's wife, whose flannel wrapper would have realized about the same sum at a sale of cast-off garments as His Excellency's somewhat startling breakfast costume, finished reading her letter, deliberately folded it, neatly replaced it in the envelope and looked at her husband. She had faced him across the table for the last forty odd years. She knew him.

"My dear," she said dispassionately, "I don't wonder that you are an ambassador, that you have more decorations than you can wear conveniently, and that the Minister for Foreign Affairs thinks so well of you."

Then she opened another letter and began to read it with an air of detachment.

His Excellency had his spoon half-way between the egg and his lips when his wife began to speak. The spoon hung there poised. When she finished the spoon was still in midair. It was plain to see that the Ambassador was struggling between curiosity, a desire to know why his wife had suddenly found him so brilliant, and a natural impulse to finish his egg. But above all things he was an ambassador. Diplomacy is self-possession. The Ambassador put the spoon in his mouth.

He looked at his wife; she was still reading the letter. The Ambassador made the preliminary sound to asking an ambassadorial question, but thought better of it and drank his coffee.

"Why?" he said at last, and looked straight in his wife's eyes.

"Why?" she repeated with an air of blank surprise. "Why what?" she added inconsequentially and without due regard to grammar.

"Confound it all, Maria, you know what I mean. What you said just now." It was not as lucid as one of His Excellency's precise dispatches, but then it was not official.

"Oh, said his wife, as though she suddenly remembered. "I said, my dear, that it was not surprising that you had advanced, because you have Carlyle's 'gift of persistence'; you are not original, and you believe that if you say a thing often enough you may get a reputation for brilliancy. This is the tenth time this month you have intimated that I ought to be appointed ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the court of His Imperial Majesty, King Mad I," she concluded without a trace of irritation.

"Jenkins!" His Excellency shouted.

The third footman shuffled in. The night before Jenkins had been an even more resplendent figure than his master, for Jenkins was twenty-three, and Jenkins's complexion was good and Jenkins's calves were superb. Jenkins, in state uniform, in knee breeches and white silk stockings, showing those calves in all their beauty, with his scarlet coat festooned with gold cord

and powder in his hair; Jenkins, in all the splendor of ambassadorial livery, was a sight to move nursemaids. Even débutantes cast a haughty glance, not unmixed with admiration, at him as he stood in a corner of the grand staircase like a perfect piece of statuary; for Jenkins had been well trained, and in some mysterious way, on state occasions, Jenkins divested himself of his breathing apparatus and became simply a work of art with calves and gold cords. But Jenkins the morning after! Oh, the pity of it! Not even the "hired girl" that Mrs. Middle West Congressman had brought with her from home to do "general work" would have wasted a second glance on him. Jenkins's calves were no longer on view; gone they were, with his gold cords and his scarlet coat and his powder, some of which, however, still remained and gave him a curiously old appearance. Evidently Jenkins had been cat-napping in the pantry and had taken his coat off, for he was still struggling with one arm of a jacket that had been white once, but was now as many colored as Joseph's coat, as he lurched into the room, barely concealing a gaping yawn, in answer to the Ambassador's summons.

"Why the dickens don't you give me some toast? And why the double dickens does it take you so long to come when I call?" His Excellency snarled.

Jenkins did not even raise his eyes in protest. He brought the toast.

His Excellency munched in silence. Maria read her letters.

The Ambassador pushed back his chair and got up awkwardly. He took a step; his weight fell on that pet toe and he groaned, for ambassadors are human when they are not in uniform, and the gout hurts them just as much as it does an ordinary person. His wife came over and stood by his side.

"Never mind, dear," she said soothingly; "take it easy."

He looked at her for a minute. "Maria," he said, "I called you a fool. Well, I oughtn't to have said that, but you know you are so damned provok-

ing at times," and with that *amende honorable* His Excellency laboriously began to move toward the door.

"Don't forget, dear," she called after him in her cooing little voice, "that the Secretary of the Red Tape Office and some other people are coming to lunch."

The Ambassador stopped short in his progress. "The deuce!" he exclaimed, and swung himself round so as to face his wife. "Now of all the stupid people in Washington—and the Lord knows there are enough—the stupidest of all is the Secretary of the Red Tape Office. No," he added maliciously; "I forgot his wife."

"I had already marked her for my own," Her Excellency quietly replied.

"Then why in the name of goodness do we have stupid people here?" His Excellency asked petulantly. "Are they your particular blamed fools, or are they mine?" he added whimsically.

"Now don't be ridiculous," his wife replied, showing the first trace of irritation that morning. "You know just as well as I do that the Secretary is the one man whom the President has never beaten at draughts—they call it 'checkers' in this country," she added with a little sniff of disdain, as if they had no right to take any such liberties—"and it is to your interest to be on good terms with the Secretary. Do you think I find his wife amusing, who has only two topics of conversation—her husband's greatness and the proper way to cook doughnuts? Bah, those Americans are all alike. They are very stupid people, but, oh, they do think they are so dreadfully smart!"

"I tell you what it is," said her husband; "we can't go this pace much longer. It's costing too much, and if we don't get that transfer pretty soon I'll have to apply for a pension."

"Now, don't worry, dear," Her Excellency said, softly patting his arm. "You're going to get that transfer, and we'll come out all right. But, oh, dear," she added with a sigh, "I do wish my father had been a soap king or something of the kind, so that he

could have given us a few millions to help out instead of only—"

"Birth," His Excellency interrupted quietly. As he said it he unconsciously drew himself up. Despite his gout and his old clothes, his unshaven face and the handkerchief about his neck, he looked what he was—an ambassador of a mighty power, to whom birth that could be traced back to one of the great robbers of history counted for more than millions that came from soap without a pedigree.

There was a light in Her Excellency's eyes. Those two might be frankly unconventional at times with no one to see them, but it was plain that they understood each other, and that she was proud of her husband's pride. "Run along," she said playfully, "and serve your king and your country in the usual way. You might tell them Mrs. Hodge's epigram if you know what it is; I'm sure I don't."

"The game of draughts—pardon me, I should say 'checkers'—has always had a peculiar fascination for me ever since I learned that the great Napoleon won his battles on the draught—pardon me, I should say 'checker'—board."

The Ambassador, in his most polished ambassadorial manner, was speaking to the Secretary of the Red Tape Office. The Ambassador was once again a "fine figure of a man," clean shaven, immaculate, perfectly groomed, dignified but gracious. Apparently he had not a care in the world; nothing more serious worried him than the fit of his monocle. Her Excellency was plainly but well dressed. Perhaps, with her usual cleverness, she had anticipated that Mrs. Secretary would wear her most stunning Paris creation, for Mrs. Secretary's father was in soap, and Mrs. Secretary felt it incumbent upon her to live up to her position and her papa's millions. It was an "informal" lunch, just one of those "quiet" affairs that the society reporters are always telling us about. There were only twenty people. There were eight or nine courses and four kinds of wine. Jenkins was there, not the Jen-

kins of scarlet and gold and those calves that nursemaids delighted in, but a subdued Jenkins in black, with trousers instead of breeches and silk stockings, as befitted an "informal" affair. And when it was all over and the Ambassador and his wife had thanked Mr. and Mrs. Secretary for having been so kind as to eat creations of the French chef and drink costly wines, and Mr. and Mrs. Secretary had said how delightful it was of the Ambassador and his wife to have invited them, the Ambassador went back to the drawing-room, lighted a cigarette and, with his back to the mantelpiece, looked at his wife, and said:

"In the old days they used to send us abroad to lie for the good of our country; now we have to ruin our digestions and listen to a silly woman talking of things she knows nothing about."

"Very dull affair," says Mrs. Secretary to her husband superciliously as they drive away. "And did you notice the frock that the Ambassadors had on? I declare, I wouldn't dare wear it to call on Mrs. Middle West Congressman," she adds in a tone that even her husband understands. For Mrs. Middle West Congressman stands quite at the bottom of the social pyramid, and in the eyes of a haughty Cabinet lady anything is good enough for her.

But this is the Washington way. The Washington way is bluff, bluff, pure and simple, where everybody bluffs and everybody knows that everybody else bluffs, and yet the bluff is kept up. It is better to have bluffed and lost than never to have bluffed at all. Washington is the place that all good snobs go to when they become rich or are made statesmen. There is no longer a democracy; there are only degrees of snobocracy. Washington is the superlative degree.

It is the one city in all America where titles count. To be anything you must be something. You must be a Senator, or a Congressman, or the Honorable This or Mr. Commissioner That which is not only your own credential,

but serves also for your wife and your sons and daughters. But better still—oh, the very heaven of snobocracy!—to be the subject of an effete monarchy and have a real title that can't be taken away because the free and independent voters have no longer any use for you. We are not nicely discriminating. Sir John Jones is just as good as Baron Smith or the Count Spaghetti or the Duke of Wienerwurst. So long as he's got a handle to his name and a coronet on his head and we call him "My Lord," we don't care a cent what he is. Of course we are too democratic, and of course too sensible, really to care about such silly things, but there is a satisfaction in saying to that chap Brown—insufferable snob—at the club in a careless sort of way:

"Had a *most* interesting talk with the Duke." You pause just long enough to notice the effect on Brown, and go on indifferently: "It's quite true what those wretched yellow papers are saying about the Princess. Of course I am not at liberty to repeat what he said, but—" and that is all you condescend to tell Brown.

And think how it sets your wife up for her to be able to say with a *blasé* air to Molly Black, who married a twelve-hundred-dollar clerk in the Red Tape Office: "At the Embassy last night the Duchess said to me—" and to know that Molly would give her husband's salary for a year to be allowed to put her foot inside the Patagonian Embassy.

The Washington bluff is as different from the New York or Chicago bluff as terrapin is from chicken in a chafing dish, with some cooking sherry to take away the taste. In New York they bluff in public; in Washington the bluff isn't worked where everybody can see it. That's vulgar. We bluff each other in the privacy of our own mansions.

Everybody in Washington pretends he is on the most intimate terms with somebody just a little bit higher in society, and nearly everybody has to run in debt to keep up the bluff. At the top of the social scale is the diplomatic corps, who are supposed never to have

to worry about money, and who spend all their time talking to pretty women and giving dinners. Bless your simple little heart, if you could only look behind the scenes and see some of the diplomatic bluffs it would open your eyes! The diplomats all bluff each other, and each minister tries to make all the others believe that he is the one man whom the President really likes. And there are very few of them that don't economize when society isn't looking. And hash is hash, whether in an embassy or a five-dollar-a-week boarding house.

It is the women who are the greatest bluffers in Washington, because they are all crazy to be in society, and most of them have nothing to do but amuse themselves. They come to Washington thinking that, because their husbands are Congressmen or Government officials, the President's wife is going to chum with them and diplomats will ask them to dinner two or three times a week. And when they have been in Washington a week or two, and find out that they are very small toads in a very big puddle, they begin to bluff. They make the other people at the boarding house sit up and take notice when they talk about dinner at the White House and tea at the Embassy, which they know about as well as most people in Washington do, strictly from the outside, for the upper ten know only people who have been properly "presented" to them, and don't waste their time on the boarding house crowd. There is only one person in Washington who is bluff proof. That's the boarding house keeper. She's seen too much of it to be taken in. It has got to be a pretty slick member of Congress who can bluff her out of a month's board.

And so it goes up and down the scale. Society in Washington is like a *pousse café*, where each ingredient is in a compartment by itself. The Congressman who lives on his salary isn't in it with the Congressman who married a rich wife and has a big house. The Senator is higher than the Congressman, but, unless he has money, he doesn't count for much. The mem-



ber of the Cabinet is way up, and he can work the bluff best of all, for everybody has to be good to him; and there are any number of people who would be only too glad to pay his rent if he would agree to invite them to dinner once a week.

Even Jenkins bluffs. Jenkins is no longer third footman at the Embassy. The other night the Ambassador gave one of his grand functions and Jenkins had his usual place at the foot of the staircase, Jenkins with calves more magnificent than ever. It got to be the

small hours of the morning when a young diplomat, who had paid frequent visits to the punch bowl, stumbled, and his sword ripped Jenkins's beautiful silk stockings. And oh, the tragedy of it! Jenkins's calves slowly shrunk and shriveled, and a little pile of sawdust was all that remained to tell of his former glory. Jenkins had bluffed and lost, but it was fun for Jenkins while it lasted. And "It is better to have bluffed and lost than never to have bluffed at all," is the Washington philosophy.



## AMARYLLIS

By IMPERIA McINTYRE

*AH, chanson de Louis Treize,*  
Soft you sing of dreamy days  
Dreamed out under dreamy skies,  
Longing looks from longing eyes,  
Loving lips that love but this—  
Other loving lips to kiss.  
Loveliest of lovely lays,  
*Toi, chanson de Louis Treize!*

*Ah, chanson de Louis Treize,*  
Dance me down the wayward ways  
Where fleet fauns and satyrs prance,  
Where disporting dryads dance  
Through green graves of Grecia, where  
All's fantastically fair—  
While Love's magic music plays,  
*Chère chanson de Louis Treize!*

*Ah, chanson de Louis Treize,*  
First I heard you when the blaze  
Of young life's wild torch had set  
All my young world blazing; yet  
Once again I hear, in truth,  
This old world sing with your youth,  
And to hear, my old age stays—  
*Douce chanson de Louis Treize!*

# HER SUPERSTITION

By RUTH LEE

IN Southern Peru, high on the eastern slope of the Andes and many difficult miles from civilization stands a long wooden building which looks like a factory on stilts, yet bears the pretentious name of "Casa Grande." This building is a village in itself—store, hotel, church, post office and home for those who come to venture health and fortune in the Inca Mining Company.

There on the wide, bare porch, one clear September morning, when the mountains were bathed in sun, lounged a number of young Americans and Englishmen. One, the center of the group, held in his hands a field glass, which he turned toward the trail and focused upon a narrow, dark, slowly moving mass far below. At times the object of his curiosity would quite disappear, only to come again into view, larger, more distinct and nearer than before. How many drivers were there? How many mules? The men on the porch made careless bets upon their number, upon the contents of the mail bags and the condition of the supplies in the water-proof boxes.

A little to one side, a tall, smoothly shaven man, somewhat older than the others, leaned against the pillar and rolled a cigarette. Occasionally he interrupted the fitful talk by shouting some order to a dark-skinned native passing near. "Eduardo," "Timoteo," "Nicanor," these soft Southern names he pronounced with a crisp American impatience intended to startle the small brown men into un-native activity. Except for these hasty orders, given in Spanish, he spoke but little. Seemingly unobservant of his surroundings, with head thrown back and eyelids half

closed, he yet studied the men before him. From time to time he raised his long, slim hand to smooth away a smile that drew down one corner of his lip, a mirthless smile, but one of satisfied comprehension.

He, as well as the others of the group, was conscious that just at the corner of the veranda, by the open window where fluttered the only curtains Casa Grande could boast, was the lady. This consciousness, which made him more than ordinarily quiet, affected his companions in the opposite way. The lady had not yet made her appearance, and they longed for a glimpse of her. They raised their voices in hope that some chance witticism might bring a laughing response. They sang snatches of songs—"Arise, Sweet Maid," "Come Into the Garden, Maud," and others which seemed to them equally appropriate.

At last they were rewarded. The lady looked out of her window with a smile of approval and invitation. Making great show of gallantry, the men went down the long veranda and bowed low before her. She allowed herself to be assisted with much ceremony over the low sill, pronouncing it all meanwhile "foolishness."

They stood about her, a grateful and admiring group. The roundness and delicate strength of her woman's figure, half hidden as it was this morning in a crisp blue linen gown, the femininity and coquetry of her sweet, piquant face, the variability and unexpectedness of her moods, the caressing sympathy and playful gaiety of her voice, all made them her devoted followers. She was to them a memory and a hope,

as well as a living, present reality. In her they found again the mother, sister, sweetheart whom they had left at home, to whom they would some day return. In spite of a certain freedom of manner, a most informal good-fellowship and slang-flavored speech, Elizabeth Bennett, Clive Reynolds's wife, had become in their minds the embodiment of all a woman should be.

At times this exalted position gave her an uneasy feeling of responsibility. It came upon her now, as she watched the mules struggling nearer and nearer up the winding trail, their burdens of boxes and bags showing more and more distinct. She gave the glasses back to the young English giant at her side, and said with sudden earnestness: "Do go in, Archie—there's a dear—and write to the poor mother. You cannot think how she is waiting and longing for a letter."

Imagination was one of her charms, and when prompted by this feeling of responsibility she sometimes used it to bring the far-away loved ones out of the mystic background of these men's thoughts. She painted with vivid colors of her own choice, making what had become merely shadows into clear, beautiful and realistic figures.

Now, as the English youth responded to her serious smile, he had for one moment the bliss of believing that the cold and forbidding *grande dame* whom he called "Mother," could indeed be capable of "longing" to hear from her wayward youngest son.

The thought of her own mother, a grand lady, too, but so loving and tender and devoted, soon drew Elizabeth back to her window. She paused long enough to smile at each of her friends in turn. "Please everybody write home this time. You will, just to please me?" One more coaxing, irresistible look and the white curtains hid her from view.

In a few moments all was quiet on the veranda. Only the man by the post remained. Again he raised his hand to his face to smooth away the smile which had become, rather, a

painful contraction of the lips. Many things had been made plain to him during that hour of silent observation. She, he had seen, had shown no favoritism, but had seemed to like them all equally. That was strange, for always she had had a favorite, a comrade, a "pal," as she herself would have said. He supposed that it was too soon for her to make a new choice. He told himself that he respected her for not hurrying the matter.

Only five days since, he had returned from the rubber country and Dr. Jenks had started for it. He realized how unwelcome to his wife had been this exchange. Doubtless Jenks had been most devoted, had given her what he would scorn to give, but what her happiness demanded, delicate yet ceaseless flattery, quick response to her passing whim and unfailing approval. If only the man had not been too deeply impressed! The lady, he felt sure, would find consolation ere long, and it might be amusing to see how she would do so in such a wilderness as this.

Of course, she was free to return to the States when she wished. His cheeks grew crimson at the thought of the cheques given her by her father at the moment of parting, doubtless in anticipation of such a crisis. Child of ease and gaiety that she was, could she be blamed for going back to the life that she loved? Even now she must be writing home. What, he wondered, was she writing? That she had had enough of exile; had grown weary of her husband and could endure it no longer? She had been plucky and game thus far, but, without the Doctor's support, could she keep it up?

The jangle of mule bells and the shouts of the drivers came clamorous from below. Betty would hear also and make a hasty end of writing. Tossing away his cigarette, he entered the house and walked down the bare hall to her room.

An immense place it was, thirty feet square. It had looked bleak and uninviting to them at first, but she had soon transformed it. There were brilliant ponchos and vicuna rugs on the

couches, unframed pictures and photographs on the walls, furniture of quaint design made from unstained native wood; books, long rows of them on homemade shelves, and growing green things everywhere.

At the far corner, seated before an unpolished coaba desk, was the lady. She did not look up at her husband's entrance, but hurriedly gathering the scattered sheets, she began to fold them and put them into an envelope.

He came close beside her chair and stood looking down at the agitated movement of her hands.

"May I address it for you?" he asked, drawing a large fountain pen from his pocket. "No"—he dropped his hand over hers—"don't seal it. I would like, if you don't mind, to read what you have written."

The lady's eyes widened in astonishment. It had been long since Clive had shown an interest in her letters. Just at the first he had seemed curious to know her impressions, had expressed surprise at her descriptions of the mountains, the blue hazes and startling cloud effects, and had laughed heartily at her character sketches of the men at camp and the one well-meaning little American woman. Without speaking she now pushed the letter toward him and rose from her chair. Questions formed themselves in her mind, but she did not utter them. She went to an opposite window, which opened upon the court, and stood looking down at the bustle and confusion below, at the feeding of the mules, the unloading of the packs, the opening of the boxes and bags. She saw her "boys" come out, one by one, each carrying letters to refill the emptied bags. She leaned out of the window to smile a greeting, but when they beckoned her to come down she shook her head. Yet she longed to join them, and turned impatiently toward her husband. Should she tell him that it was considered bad luck to be the last to post a letter? But as she turned he began to read aloud slowly and distinctly, so that she felt compelled to listen:

#### "DEAREST ONES:

"This is the first chance in two weeks to send out mail. The poor little beasts of burden are struggling through the last gorge at this moment, and in half an hour they will be here.

"Since last I wrote we have had a carnival. It lasted three days and nights and left the camp in a most demoralized condition. Of course everyone got drunk except the Doctor and Archie. It was pitiful to see the natives after it was all over. I will spare you harrowing details and say only that the Doctor and I were busy from dawn till dusk. (Another of my beloved night-gowns torn up for bandages!) Poor devils! If only all their celebrations were as harmless as their chief extravagance! You know, they earn but a dollar a day, yet for a carnival they recklessly buy barrels and barrels of flour, at thirty cents a pound, to throw at one another.

"Dr. Jenks left five days ago. He waited to get us safely through the festive time and to hear Clive's report upon conditions in Tambopata. It's a forlorn place without him, I assure you. And yet, you will say, I have other friends at camp. The Doctor used to tell me there was not one of our boys who would not gladly lay down his life for me, and I believe him. Poor lads, I must begin to pay them some attention again. I think I will, this very night, make them my choicest angel cake.

"Soon I will send you our butterflies. We have a fine collection started, but I cannot add to it without the Doctor's help. You know I never was good at 'setting my own tasks,' as Sister Mary Salvina would say, but this one man could always keep me occupied. What with the catching of butterflies, playing on the mandolin and banjo, reading of Stevenson and Kipling—he is such a beautiful reader—and the care of broken natives, he left me little time to mope.

"But what shall I do now? 'All the same a thousand years hence'—can't you just hear old Jim say that? All the same six weeks hence when you get this, no doubt. Then I shall have consoled myself with a new comrade and forgotten *Medico mio*.

"There is Archie now, a big, vigorous, alert, restless fellow. He has already begun his suit by bringing me a monkey from the rubber country, and has made elaborate plans for the poor little fellow's education. May I bring Marincito home when this exile is over? He will have excellent manners by that time, I am sure.

"Do write oftener. I need your letters to keep me good. You do not realize how hard it is to remember old-time scruples and conventions when one is 'way off the map' as we are.

"There are the mules—something tells me that they bring a letter from you. Am I not a hopeful little thing?

"Love to everybody, but most to you two dearest ones on earth.

"Yours,  
"BETTY."

At last it was over. The lady went quickly to the desk and held out her hand for the sheets of paper.

"Isn't it a nice letter?" she asked frivolously, hoping to ease the strain a little.

But the tense lines of her husband's face did not relax, and his words came as slow and distinct as before.

"It will hurt them, Betty; can't you see that? Your letter is all about other men"—he flushed slightly—"not a word of me, your husband. They will notice the omission and think that we—do not go yet, Betty—think that we are not happy."

She laughed nervously and moved again to his side.

"You know, dear"—he hesitated at the unusual word—"you know their one wish is for our happiness. Ought we not try to play a part, in our letters, at least, pretend a little?"

Betty gazed wonderingly at her husband's face. Could it be that he cared for his own sake as well as for the sake of those at home? Could it be that he missed her, that he wanted her even

as— She felt herself being gently drawn to the arm of his chair, and there she was held, close and still for many, many minutes.

Thus Archie found her when he came bounding down the hall to her door. At the threshold he stopped short, blushing like a schoolboy. He had expected to find her alone, had hoped to spend hours with her over her letters and magazines, as a reward for bringing them up. He remembered that the Doctor had often done so. He felt very ill at ease, and was relieved when Reynolds came forward for the mail so that he need not enter the room.

"I'm sure I beg your pardon for stumbling in upon you in this way," he said, "but I thought Mrs. Reynolds might have a letter ready to send. The mules are about to start."

For a moment the lady looked straight into the eyes of her husband, then turning to Archie said, a note of gladness in her voice which puzzled him: "Thank you, lad, but I'm a little superstitious—about being late, you know." And slowly she tore the paper in her hands. "But remember, my letter must be first when the mules come back again."



## WHEN LOVE GREW OLD

By BLANCHE WAGSTAFF

WHEN love was young it was a sacred thing,  
A fairy spirit to be guarded o'er  
And tended as a rosebud in the spring  
That blossoms fearful of the clouds' downpour.  
It was so sweet its memory rests unsung—  
When love was young!

When love grew old within our hearts one day  
We saw it loom before us lean and pale,  
A poor, neglected ghost of life's glad May,  
And thus we wounded it. It was too frail  
To stand the blow. Oh, empty hearts turned cold  
When love grew old!

# FATE

By S. TEN EYCK BOURKE

A S Balliot rounded the apex of the grove, the seep-seep of steel cut through the air, and the sharp spat of a bullet in the roadway set the dust eddying about the hoofs of his mount. The outraged pony swerved in his stride and bolted, snorting, for the cover of bamboo and palms behind him. Balliot sprang from the saddle and slapped the trembling beast encouragingly on the flank.

"Steady there, steady, boy! Almost got us, eh? You've a natural distaste for bullets, Pete, that's better than a life preserver, and I don't think they spotted us this time."

Balliot slung the reins over his arm and advanced to the edge of the grove. He peered cautiously from the covert of palm fronds, along the road, where it debouched into the open and ran, a parched white glare, between palm fields toward the fringing plume of a twin thicket a mile or so distant.

Through the sun haze Balliot discerned crawling khaki-clad bodies in the open, that rose now and again from behind the small inequalities of surface where they lay, flattened like lizards, to shoot back into the annihilating hail that was being poured at them from behind the little brown rice dikes yonder, where a third hedge skirted the rice paddies to the east.

"Another score of white men grabbing glory, trying to round up these infernal brown beggars!" he muttered. "S'pose those laddies got gay too near the town, so the Colonel started in to clear up the district all over, for the 'steenth time. H'm, that's odd! They can't know of that back trail."

From his covert Balliot could see

the tiny vaporous clouds of dust that rose constantly, now from the limestone of the road, now from the paddy fields on each side. At times he could trace the course of a bullet where it flaunted along the parched highway, or from rice dike to rice dike, and always, he noted, the line of firing receded from the spot where the steel-jacketed lead bit the dust beneath his pony's nose.

Of the detachment there were left only six now, and presently the slow crawling commenced again to the opposite goal of fringing bamboo, where, Balliot knew, ultimate death lurked for them. Behind, a trail of empty shells and sprawling bodies marked their way.

Balliot stared dispassionately across the heat-tortured paddy fields, with that aloofness from all desire to intervene actively in the drama of war which had been characteristic of him during his long sojourn in the islands. Then, as the little band dwindled, and the survivors entrenched themselves behind the brown dikes, determined to sell their lives as dearly as possible, the lust of combat descended suddenly upon him.

Swiftly measuring the distance between the forlorn little remnant and the nearest point of shelter in the grove, he dragged the unwilling pony into the palm thicket and securely tethered him.

"It's a bare chance, but it's a fighting chance. If I can get to them, and we can get back here, Pete, with you to pace us, we can outrun those brown devils through the narrow back trail. So," he muttered, with a final tug at



the knotted reins, "I'll just anchor you right in the mud, where *you* can't bolt like a green sojer boy out for his first fight!"

The frightened pony pointed his ears after him, and whinnied nervously, straining at the reins, but Balliot went forward unheeding. His face had grown grim with his last words, which epitomized the wreck of his own early high hopes—the pitiful error of his boyish incomprehension which a jealous man, better versed in war craft, had warped to tragedy.

At the edge of the thicket he dropped face downward in the road and wormed his way forward. The attention of the Filipinos was strenuously engaged elsewhere, and his khaki riding clothes effaced themselves against the enviroing brown dikes, so that his progress was rapid. He stopped an instant beside a fallen private to secure a "Long Tom" and a cartridge belt, of which the dead man would have no more need. Then he crawled on again.

Once within the zone of firing, he was compelled to abandon the smooth going of the road for the uneven paddy fields. He chafed cruelly at the delay which the increasing difficulty of concealment necessitated. And, already, behind the rice dike toward which he labored, there were two men now where three had been.

One of the men wore leather leggings and a pistol, which he neglected for a more serviceable rifle, Balliot noted, as he crawled painfully up to them.

The officer sheered round, staring over a bloody bandage that concealed the lower half of his face, while from an angry seam across his forehead a thin crimson line streaked from which heavy drops spattered, still further disfiguring him. Then his gray eyes glanced along the rifle.

"If they're firing from behind that hedge to the east—it's—because they came from the east." Balliot spoke jerkily between pauses, as he abstracted the shells from his cartridge belt, one at a time, and spat them viciously through the hot tube in his hand at the little brown men lying flat on their

stomachs behind those other brown dikes. "They've probably got a couple of hundred Filipinos strung along there, and you got into this scattering fire. There's a couple of carabao wallows back there in line with the road, more than halfway to the grove. We can make a stand there that'll give us a chance to cover the balance in safety."

The officer wasted no time in purposeless comment; he flattened himself again in the scorching dust.

"You always had the making of a soldier in you, Balliot," he said, as he crawled off in the direction indicated. "Dugan's down!"

"Balliot!"

Balliot glared after this stranger, encountered in that popping, scorching hell in a strange land. But the imminent peril dispelled the paralyzing thrill of the unexpected words, and he snaked his way blindly after the other, his mind grappling with the enigma.

Already elbows and knees were through his clothes, and raw and bloody, but the pain was forgotten in memories Balliot had striven years to down, which that unhappy phrasing vividly recalled. The voice, too, was familiar, and the look in the gray eyes. He had not noticed these in the stress of combat.

"The makings of a soldier!" Balliot groaned. So he had hoped when the outbreak of the war with Spain, which found him in Cuba, where his father had large holdings, sent him headlong to the invading American forces. And because the elder Balliot was a man of power in the political storm center at Washington, there was talk of a commission. Meanwhile Balliot messed with the officers, and chafed for opportunity to show the metal of his making, while he waited for the cabled confirmation.

A bullet whined past, and something trickled down Balliot's cheek. He lifted his hand and brought it away, streaked with crimson. What did it matter? A bullet meant death at most.

If only he had known then! For

opportunity had not delayed. Things happened quickly in those days. He volunteered with a detachment sent into the guerrilla-infested zone, marching under Lieutenant Wheaton, the one man of any he liked least.

For the world-old triangle had meshed these two—the boy, the man and a maid—and beset them with war's grim psychology, which is harsh and unlovely, and seizes upon men in divers ways; and some are not heroic.

Balliot it seized with the panic fear which experienced officers come to expect in those who adventure for the first time into the actuality of bullets, blood lust and sudden death.

Balliot, not being bulwarked, as are the many among the ranks, but heading, by special dispensation of Wheaton, the "point," fled from the maze of flame and lead unexpectedly loosed upon them from a hidden vantage point his inexperience had missed. Afterward he swelled with the searing shame of cowardice on his soul, the reckoning the others of the "point" had footed up with their lives.

When Balliot, stumbling in headlong flight through the tropical undergrowth, providentially circled back to the little command, the men hailed him as one returned miraculously from death, and told gleefully of the overthrow of the enemy. Only Wheaton knew the secret hell that raged in Balliot's breast. Wheaton, listening to his tormented outpourings with that impenetrable look in his gray eyes—

Wheaton! He had it! In Berserk rage, Balliot sprang to his feet and howled the name after the crawling figure at the edge of the carabao wallow.

A stinging agony in his shoulder reminded him that man, lying close to his mother earth, affords the least target, and he dropped breastward to the ground. An increasing fire swept over the two, lashing the air about them with fiendish whispers.

As Balliot rolled into the wallow, two sharp spats set the dust volleying in clouds, and the officer crumpled, his chin striking the ground sharply;

one of the shots had crashed through both hips.

"Help me," he choked.

"Help yourself," Balliot retorted savagely. "You know how to sit tight and let another man damn himself."

A lull followed the sharp attack. For the first, the two men were sheltered securely from sight, and the pursuing imps halted to estimate the mead of destruction they had dealt out.

Balliot stared at the stricken man, smiling grimly at the irony of fate, which culminated his frustrated years in this Homeric endeavor to save a man who, in a land thousands of miles distant, surrendered him to the scourge of his supposed cowardice.

The wounded officer lifted himself on his elbows in a futile effort to twist his crippled frame.

"Help! I'm smothering," he moaned.

The words ended in a shrill wail that roused all the beast latent in Balliot. He jerked the body around and turned it over.

"There," he snarled, "that squares us. You kicked me when I was down."

Wheaton groaned. "Man," he protested, endeavoring to fix his wandering gaze on Balliot; "man, you were never a coward."

Balliot thrust his face close to the feebly swaying head with its dropped jaw.

"No? Well, you couldn't have chosen a worse plea." There was cold fury in his eyes. "You knew it when I was babbling out my boy's heart to you—you let me grind my pride to nothing, before you, and never said a word to lift me out of the hell. You knew— Fighting was your trade; in the years you were a man while I was growing from a boy, you learned what I found out only when it was too late."

Wheaton stirred uneasily, his eyes maintaining their forced contemplation of Balliot, as the pitiless voice, vibrant with tense excitement, went on.

"And you warned me not to talk with the men; said I could get away with my secret—no one need know!"

Balliot laughed a short, hard laugh. "You knew well enough they'd tell me ninety-nine men out of a hundred went panic mad in their first fight."

The sound of firing began again. Before their imperative need, Wheaton rallied his failing strength in an effort to efface in the other the memory of his wrongs, in the consciousness of their imminent danger.

"Help me up to the edge of the wallow, Balliot," he urged. "I can shoot if I get braced into position. If we can only hold them off long enough, we may get help."

Balliot thrust back Wheaton's bullet-torn body. A cry of agony leaped to the officer's lips.

"God! Be careful!" he gasped.

"Careful!" The restrained bitterness of years surged uppermost in Balliot and made him kin to those unhallowed Inquisitors of old. "Yes, I'll be careful. You've got just so long to live peacefully and comfortably as it takes those Filipinos to get here. I'm going to rig up a flag of truce. And when those devils get here I'll hand you over— Maybe they'll do to your body what you did to my soul. I've heard of things among some of the natives—"

Wheaton licked his parched lips, and his labored breathing stirred up little dust clouds, like the little white spurts that were circling in closer round them now.

"No—they won't do for me," Balliot malignantly answered the unspoken words. "Fate played into your hands equivocally when, instead of my commission, I found that cable when we got back, telling of my father's seizure. In the months he lingered the war was over, and I never had another chance. By the time I found out the truth, I'd acquired a *habit* of considering myself a coward and dodging trouble. I've kept up that habit since I've been out here; and half those devils out there have had profitable dealings one way or another with me. Oh, *I'm* safe enough!"

Wheaton's hand reached round to his hip, but Balliot was quicker. He

seized the revolver, and dragged the rifles out of reach.

"Balliot!" Wheaton gasped, horror struck; "you know I don't fear death, but—you can't give a helpless man over to—that!"

Balliot's voice was cold as steel and his level glance was merciless.

"You forged a boomerang when you placed me in the van, just where you knew I'd go to pieces because I was raw, and afterward, when you took such good care not to give me another chance on that expedition."

"But, Balliot, I couldn't foresee—"

Balliot flung off his khaki coat, and tore at the white shirt underneath.

"You counted on my keeping out of the ruck sooner than disgrace the old man's name," he interrupted, his voice shaking with suppressed passion. "Oh, I knew what was at the bottom, when *she* faced me with her cool remarks about cowards!"

Hope flamed in Wheaton's eyes as the other bared his secret. Unscrupulous he might be, but he played his last stake gallantly.

"Well, yes," he admitted. Shaking with the agony of his wounds, he fumbled in his breast. "I'd do it again for the same stake. We loved each other, but I was only a poor man. I had no chance against you, with her father, and—after all, she was only a girl."

Mechanically Balliot reached for his rifle. Under the blow, the dominant habit of repression remained true to him. His next words were interspersed with rapid shots, for the little brown men were close upon them.

"You were married? Does she—care—much?" he asked dully.

The painful fumbling ceased. Balliot took the leather folder from the shaking fingers and opened it. A woman's face looked out at him. A smile lurked about the mobile mouth, and the eyes were bent happily on the baby face pressed close to hers.

Balliot laughed, a dry, mirthless laugh, piteous as a sob.

"Yes, you're happy, little girl! I can't harm him—now. I can't—"

I can't—it's not fair—but—he's made you happy, little girl," he whispered brokenly.

Reverently he touched his lips to the child face so close to hers; then he spoke crisply, all the dullness gone from him.

"We must get out of this! Quick, Wheaton; I'll have to carry you."

There was no answer. Balliot understood. One instant he delayed, to place the folio in its hiding place on Wheaton's unconscious breast. Then he sprang up.

A score of ragged natives, taking advantage of the cessation in the firing, had crept in, till now they were scarce three hundred paces distant.

Balliot seized the limp figure, slung it across his shoulder, and lurched heavily down the road to the haven of the second carabao wallow. A ball sped past him, and another found its target in his body, but he did not fall till he reached the wallow.

Coolly, with the precision of a veteran marksman, his eyes went swiftly from side to side. Underneath the sweat-drenched shirt the muscles of his back coiled and twisted as his rifle cracked venomously.

Again Balliot took up his burden and staggered on to his last goal. His breath whistled in sobs through his clenched teeth, but in the majesty of his purpose he towered a wonderful, terrible figure before whom that ragged score of brown men hesitated, and stayed their oncoming rush.

For Balliot, life had nothing more to offer, but with the body of the man *she* loved weighting his wounded shoulder, the primal instinct bade him fight for life.

He reached the edge of the grove before the first native overtook him. Him Balliot received on the bayonet of the soldier's rifle and tossed aside like chaff. A second and a third grappled for him, and went down before that flaillike barrel.

He had fifty yards' gain now, for their fellows had halted and were firing again. He crashed through the fronding palms, to where the pony waited

in nervous frenzy. Flinging the unconscious form across the saddle, he severed the reins with a single slashing stroke.

The pony dashed forward, carrying the limp burden on his back and Balliot swinging at the bit strap. He heard the shouts of the Filipinos as they followed into the thicket, as he went forward in the headlong rush. He reeled and stumbled, and once he fell in the narrow trail, but his grip never relaxed, and he was on his feet again before the flying iron shoes struck him.

Crushed in soul, his body bruised and bleeding, spurred to supernal effort by the love that had so long been vital to his very being, he stayed the grim Reaper's hand through all the dreary miles of the flight.

They had emerged from the forest, circling back into the highroad. Balliot had become a thing numb and insensate; the pony's rush had slackened to a feeble trot; and behind, in the swift tropical twilight, the natives had long ceased to pursue, when a rill of childish laughter and a woman's clear voice revived his flagging senses.

Framed in a square doorway, with white moonflowers twining about its bamboo posts, a woman smiled out at him, and in her arms a gold-crowned baby laughed and held out dimpling hands.

Balliot staggered forward, swaying on the pony's bridle.

"I've brought him—little girl," he whispered, and fell, face downward, in the dust, with the weary pony nosing his prostrate form.

The mother's cry of alarm brought instant succor. Her husband lifted Wheaton gently from the saddle, and laid him beside that other tired body.

"Loss of blood more than anything else," he told his wife, examining the wounds with practised skill. "He'll pull through."

But Balliot slept, his head pillowed on his arm, like Corporal Dugan, back in that distant paddy field, hedged by the fringing bamboo, and the waving fronds of the palm trees.

# TO THE NEW YEAR AND THE OLD FRIENDS

By HENRY CHRISTOPHER CHRISTIE

THE moon wanes pale in the sky,  
And the stars all blink for morn;  
The old year is to die,  
And the new year to be born.  
We have passed through the vale of tears,  
We have trod the journey long,  
We have shared our hopes and fears,  
We have shared our grief and song;  
And we've shared them all with our old friends,  
Our true friends, our few friends,  
And we'll drain anew to our old friends,  
The friends that are always true.



## FROM THE JOURNAL OF MADAME LEANDRE

By HELEN WOLJESKA

1. Desire—it might be the mother of love; it is sometimes its murderer.
2. The sins we never dreamed of—those sins we ne'er commit!
3. Family life is always a hindrance to fearless individual development—it may be through its sweetness; it may be through its curse.
4. Men usually begin to live for their health when they have not any left.
5. One friend draws out one phase of our personality, another friend another. The friend who draws out the one that most appeals to ourselves—he is our favorite friend!
6. You should be unconventional enough to approve even of the conventional—when you find it truly fitting.

# THE CUTHBERT CASE

By ALICE HATHAWAY CUNNINGHAM

THE early homegoing crowd surged up the Avenue, each one in a hurry, intent on reaching his particular destination quickly. The air was clear and crisp, the river a wavering crimson band from the glow of the setting sun. A small newsboy shouted his wares vigorously. "Extry! Extry!" he cried, and shoved his papers into the faces of the passers-by in his eagerness.

Roberta paused on the corner to allow a wagon to pass, and the boy noted her at once as a possible customer. "Paper, lady?" he said. "All the baseball news, ma'am!" Then, as she did not appear interested, he continued: "An' all about the Cut'bert divorce, too, miss." He pressed the paper into her hand and stood smiling. Startled out of her reverie, she stared at him a moment. "No, no, I don't want a paper," she said sharply, "but—here's a penny." She put a few coppers into his outstretched hand and hastily continued on her way up the Avenue.

For days it had been the same; each way one turned it was the Cuthbert case—Cuthbert vs. Cuthbert. The prominence of the plaintiff—the well known artist, Philip Cuthbert—caused it to be widely read and discussed, and people took sides enthusiastically, some declaring that his charges were absurdly false, merely trumped up affairs to help him gain his liberty, while on the other side there were grave wiseacres who maintained an air of mystery and said there were always *two* sides to every story. It had held the center of the stage for a week and today it was to go to the jury. Since ten o'clock in the morning extras had been out with the "only authorized statement" of

Cuthbert, or his wife, or their counsel, each one in flat contradiction of the other, and none of them true!

Roberta hurried on with mental fingers to her ears each time she passed a newsboy. Why this rush she could not tell, since time was the one thing she possessed in abundance, but her nerves were racked and needed quick action, while her heart kept up a lively dance in her breast to the tune of the words her brain sang: "It is all over—it is all over. The time is up. You will see him soon." She suddenly decided to return home at once; perhaps there was a message from him. Why, of course, there *must* be. He would want her to know immediately. She turned sharply, and cutting across the park, was quickly swinging up the street bound for home.

It was a fair enough house of the "furnished room and board" variety in one of the cross streets, but to Roberta just now it seemed particularly pleasant—a thing to be desired—and she almost ran the last few steps to the door. Letting herself in with her latch-key, she called softly to the maid going through the hall.

"Katie," she said with a ring of hope in her voice, "has there been a 'phone call for me—or anything?" The light died out of her eyes at the girl's negative nod.

"Not even a letter? Perhaps a little note by messenger?" she suggested.

"No, ma'am, there was no 'phone and no letter and no note," repeated Katie wearily, and then as Roberta turned and started listlessly up the stairs, she remarked:

"There was a box came for you, Miss

Crane, almost as soon as you went out. I put it on your washstand."

"Thank you, Katie."

She continued up the stairs for two long flights and entered her room. The fact that there was no message, no sign from Cuthbert, caused her uneasiness. Could it be possible that anything had gone wrong, and that he could not bear to communicate with her? But that was impossible. He would not discuss the case with her, but she knew he was sanguine as to the outcome, and they had planned the future, building their bright *châteaux en Espagne* on the foundation that all would be well.

She started to remove her street things. The sun dropped redly behind the chimney tops and cast a ruddy spot on the somewhat faded carpet. She went to the window to raise the shade to its fullest extent, and then it was that she saw the box on the washstand, forgotten until now.

It was a small violet-colored box from one of the larger florists. Roberta opened it eagerly and exclaimed with pleasure over the heavy cluster of sweet, friendly-faced pansies that smiled back at her. "Heartsease," she murmured delightedly. There was a small card attached. "Mr. Philip Cuthbert," it read simply, and on the back in his strong, firm hand: "Am thinking of you."

Her eyes filled with happy tears at his thoughtfulness, and she pressed the smiling pansies to her heart. All doubts and fears vanished now, and she laughed aloud with the sweet joy of being loved. She sat in happy reverie, thinking of the past few months, of the time she had first met Philip, of their love—so tiny at first as to be unsuspected by either, then the day when he had blurted out his feelings to her and she, taken off her guard, had confessed her love for him. She remembered how he had overcome her old-fashioned New England prejudice against divorce, until she had consented to let him free himself for her sake from what he said was a loveless marriage. In fact, he had swept her off her feet entirely, for

he was as unlike the man she had thought she could care for as possible.

He was rich, cultured, emotional, perhaps, but a thoroughgoing man of the world. Comparison with any of the few men she had known was impossible. He was far above them all—even John. Things were so changed in aspect since she had come to the city. She had often meant to write and tell him, to tell all at home, in fact, but they were so different, so narrow in their views, that she shrank from it, and with each delay it seemed the harder. But now! How glorious it would be to go back for a while and be able to help them all! To give Janie the music lessons her soul craved; to brighten the house and make a cheery sun room for the dear, patient mother, and give something, only a little, so that the old father need work no longer!

Philip and she had talked it all over, and although she had been loth to accept such gifts, he had insisted—he was so generous, so more than kind. Of course there was still John; but as Philip had said: "Dear, a great happiness to one always brings a measure of sorrow to another, and surely he could not expect you to remain bound to him now. You—with your enlightened ideas, your broad-mindedness. The life of the farm would kill you, throttle all your dreams and aspirations," and she knew he was right; nevertheless, she had not told John.

Katie came running up the stairs, and giving a light tap on the door, walked into the room.

"This letter just came for you, miss, and you seemed to want one so bad, I brought it right up," she said, handing Roberta a thick envelope.

Roberta's face flushed and her hand trembled as she put it out to receive the packet. "It came by—a boy, Katie?" she cried joyfully.

"No'm, the regular mail man," said the girl, as she went out.

Roberta's smile faded. Disappointed, she looked at the letter in her hand—the usual fortnightly budget from John, with its minute news of home, everything that could possibly inter-



est her, and then, at the last, some bashful, awkward words of love, sincere, but so vastly different from the turned, polished phrases of the city man.

As she looked at the uneven but strong, legible writing her heart smote her at the thought of what it would all mean to John, this sudden awakening that would so sorely hurt the "big man," as little brother Dan had called him. She opened the letter, and as she read, her misgivings became stronger. How cruel to pain a man like this; his gentle ministrations to the old people—he had helped the old father build a new henhouse for the winter, and had fashioned a window seat in the sewing room for the little mother—and his abiding faith in her all touched her strongly. She thought reluctantly that if she had not come to the city young and eager for literary fame there would be no need to wound him, and the dearest wish of the old people's hearts—to call him "son"—could be fulfilled. But she would not regret it. Fame had not come, it is true, but love had, and that was the better, she knew.

With characteristic energy she decided to write John tonight, now, and tell him everything, and the old folks, too. It was unfair to everybody—herself included, to keep them in ignorance any longer. She would have to be very careful, for she and Philip had agreed it would be better to wait until he knew them and had made a favorable impression before telling them he was divorced. "They might not care to know me otherwise," he had remarked naively, and Roberta gladly acquiesced.

She was writing when Katie came up for the second time and entered the room after a perfunctory tap.

"There is a lady to see you, miss," she said, advancing toward Roberta. "She's very anxious, but she didn't give any name."

"A lady—to see me?" repeated Roberta wonderingly. "Are you sure there is no mistake?" and as the girl shook her head, she continued with finality: "Oh, there *must* be, Katie. But I cannot see her, anyway. I am expecting—someone else, you know."

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The girl nodded understandingly as she went to the door; then with her hand on the knob she paused and looked back at Roberta.

"She said it was important—she had a message."

"A message!" From *him* undoubtedly. Roberta's heart leaped exultingly at the thought. "I will see her at once, Katie," she cried, and Katie passed out wondering.

A minute or so more and there came a gentle rap. In answer to Roberta's hasty "Come in," there entered a tall woman, simply dressed in rich gray, her skirts falling in full folds around her feet. Through the veil in which her head was shrouded Roberta caught a glimpse of waved masses of snowy hair arranged in the latest mode under a small, close fitting toque.

"Miss Crane?" said the stranger, advancing, and even at the moment Roberta liked her for the full, rich tones of her voice.

Roberta bowed. "Yes," she said, "and—" She paused interrogatively.

The other woman threw back her veil and looked at Roberta squarely. Her eyes were deep, dark blue, clear and steady, the face young and fresh.

"I am Mrs. Philip Cuthbert," she said.

Roberta gave a little cry. "Philip's wife!" she gasped. The other woman! "Yes," she said, "Philip's wife."

Roberta stared at her dumbly, a great question in her eyes, which her lips feared to utter.

"You—you—" she managed to say brokenly.

Mrs. Cuthbert nodded. "I have come—to see you—and to talk about—you and Philip," she said, and looked around the room suggestively. Roberta mechanically pointed out a chair and sank wearily on the couch.

"Well?" she said coldly. By sheer will power she was forcing the roaring in her ears to stop and quieting the dreadful throbbing in her temples. She crossed her hands and looked calmly at the other woman.

Mrs. Cuthbert coughed nervously. "Of course it is a surprise for you that I

am here," she began lamely. She gazed reflectively at Roberta, then around the neat room, so cozy and so strictly feminine in every detail. Her eyes lighted up with soft amusement as her glance rested on the bowl of pansies on the dresser. "Philip, of course," she murmured softly. Then her gaze traveled back to Roberta, and she bent forward in almost friendly fashion.

"How plausible he must have been," she said gently, "to have won *you* to himself. You are so different. All this"—she waved her hand gracefully around the room—"everything about you shows that you are not that kind of woman."

"What kind of woman?" It seemed to Roberta that the hoarse voice asking the question came from someone at a great distance.

"Why—the kind of woman that—that does this kind of thing. The kind of woman Philip would be attracted to in that way. Yes," she added quietly, "there have been other women, but not like you. And the newspapers, too, they misrepresented you. They—"

"Stop!" Roberta roused herself and faced the other. "Do you mean that my name—that I—" She paused, overcome by the horrible idea that slowly forced itself into her brain, then fell back on the couch, covering her crimson face with her hands. "He promised—he promised—" she muttered to herself.

"Promised what?" asked Mrs. Cuthbert sharply. "To keep you out of it all? Well," she laughed bitterly, "*he* kept a promise for once. It was *I* who brought you into this case to defend myself!" she finished defiantly.

Roberta half smothered a tiny groan, but gave no other evidence of having heard, and Mrs. Cuthbert continued: "I suppose he advised against your reading the paper? Naturally. It was best. There was no need for you to learn too much about him." She waited for a minute and looked at Roberta gently.

"Then you did not know that—that I—that they refused to grant him the decree? That they threw his case out?"

Roberta felt that she had expected this. She knew it must come, yet the telling of it brought a quick little stab of pain to her heart, but she clenched her hands and no sound escaped her lips. Mrs. Cuthbert's glance changed to one of admiration.

"You are brave," she said. She considered a moment, while her eyes, as they rested on Roberta, became soft; then she went on:

"Yes," she said, "and perhaps I can afford to be generous." She leaned forward and placed her hand gently over Roberta's.

"I could not condemn you for your love for Philip if I would. His is a nature that charms all who come in contact with him, both young and old, men and women—but especially women. I have been his wife for fifteen years, and in that time many women have loved him—and he has loved many." An expression of pain crossed her features and she withdrew her hand abruptly, then resumed quietly:

"It is his nature; he cannot help it. At first I could not understand, and my hair turned white, as you see it now, in the first five years of my married life—and I am only thirty-eight! Then, after a while, I understood. He is a man who can command love at will, but he can return it only in fragments for a time. He has been cruel, and this time it is hard to forgive, but I have clung to him, for I understand and—love him. Although once he went from me for a whole year."

Roberta gave a little cry. "Left you for a year—with another!" she said.

"Yes, but he came back to me. He has always come back, and those—ah, those are the times that compensate for all." There was a calm triumph in the full tones that amazed Roberta.

"I know that he will come back to me—always," the rich voice went on. "Always, *always*," she repeated a trifle vehemently. "Even had he married you he would have come back—after a time. If you could have held him forever I would have let him go. I would have given up my name—my place in the world if need be. But that is im-

possible; no woman could do that, I know. Ah, you do not think so?" she cried, noting the tiny smile that curved at the corner of the other's red mouth. "You think that *you* alone of them all could have held him?"

She regarded Roberta for a few seconds critically. "No," she said finally, "you—could have held him least of all. For you would have loved him *too* much—that is your nature, I think, to give all freely—and that is death to love in Philip. It would bore him far too quickly."

Roberta winced. "You do not understand," she cried brokenly, sobs checking her speech.

"Yes," replied the elder woman, "I *do* understand. My heart was broken years ago that I *might* understand and feel no bitterness."

She rose and crossed over to the couch, and kneeling, drew the sobbing girl to her heart. Roberta stayed for but an instant; then she rose trembling and looked at the other woman with tear-filled eyes.

"You have been very—kind," she said in a low voice, "but I think I cannot bear any more tonight. Would you mind—going now?" she finished simply, and then fell senseless at Mrs. Cuthbert's feet.

Mrs. Cuthbert raised her gently and placed her on the couch, then rang for Katie.

"Miss Crane has had some news that has upset her," she said to the maid, who stood staring in undisguised amazement. "I shall spend the night with her. Will you bring some fresh water, please, and come back in about fifteen minutes to make up a bed for me?" She smiled on the wondering Katie and softly closed the door.

Roberta awoke after a short, troubled sleep and lay blinking in the first light of dawn that came through the window. The events of the night before struggled slowly back to her consciousness—the waiting, Mrs. Cuthbert's visit and all that followed. She lay and thought. Her whole life lay in ruins about her feet. The future loomed darkly in

front of her, and there seemed no ray to brighten the gloom. What could she do? She told herself fiercely that she would never write again; the city had shown her that country talent was less than mediocre. Her head throbbed and she tossed restlessly from side to side.

She saw the pansies on the dresser, now withered and dying, emblems of her brief, sweet romance, and there on the table, unfinished as she had left it, her letter to John. She would not need to finish it now, for the idea was slowly forming in her tired brain that all there was left for her to do was to go back—back to the home, to the old folks—and to John, who needed and wanted her.

Katie came up after a while with two cups of steaming coffee, begged from the cook, and Mrs. Cuthbert opened the door at her knock. Katie handed her the tray. "And here's Miss Crane's paper, too. I thought I'd bring it up. And if any letters come I'll bring them up, too."

Mrs. Cuthbert thanked her, and closing the door, went over to the bed.

"Dear," she said, "the little maid has brought some coffee for you. Won't you try to drink it?" She laid the paper on the bed while she arranged the tray.

Roberta seized on it eagerly. There was no reason why she should not read it now, and perhaps—who could tell?—there might be something more, something Mrs. Cuthbert had not told her. At her first glance at the flaming headlines a faint scream came from her parched lips, and all grew black before her eyes. She turned to Mrs. Cuthbert, and her voice was high and shrill:

"Oh, you are wicked, wicked, cruel! See what you have done! He loved *me*, he did, he did—and now he is dead! May God never forgive you!" She covered her face with the bedclothes and rocked back and forth in a wild paroxysm of grief.

Mrs. Cuthbert seized the paper. In startling type that almost covered the front of the sheet her eyes beheld the following:

## PHILIP CUTHBERT SHOOTS HIMSELF

Well Known Artist Attempts Suicide  
At His Club

She read on down the page, her breath coming in little gasps. Was it true then? Had she, after all, made a mistake, and had his love for Roberta been sincere, the one grand passion of his life?

Her eyes devoured the printed words—then she gave a little sob of relief.

"Hush, you little fool!" she said to Roberta, who was crying wildly. "Stop your crying and read it *all*! Can't you see he only shot himself slightly—in the *arm*? He is injured hardly at all—trust him for that. Now he will receive more feminine sympathy. Pshaw!" She tossed the paper back at Roberta and turned away from the bed and began calmly to drink her coffee.



## WHAT ARE THE TRUMPS OF LIFE?

By ALFRED B. MACKAY

"**W**HAT are the trumps of life?  
"Hearts," said the maiden fair;  
"For sweetheart, maid, or wife,  
Love is beyond compare."

"No," said the heartless flirt,  
"Diamonds the trumps shall be;  
Hearts are as cheap as dirt;  
Give wealth and power to me."

"No," said the man *blasé*,  
"Clubs are the trumps we want;  
Such gauds for the young and gay,  
But Clubs for the *bon vivant*."

Then the gravedigger said:  
"Vanities soon are past;  
The earth shall be your bed,  
And Spades must win at last!"



**A** MAN is as great a fool as a clever woman thinks it worth while to make him.

# ARTISTIC TEMPERAMENTALISTS

## A Modern Instance

By HAROLD SUSMAN

**I**N a certain studio building there were thirty apartments.

They were all occupied.

Furthermore, they were all occupied by people who "did things."

Some of these people sang, and some of them painted—and all of them posed.

Billy was one of those who sang.

He sang tenor.

One knew he would, even before he did it.

He was pink and puffy, and his hair was yellow, and his eyes were blue.

He wore rings.

He sang serenades and sonatas.

And he sang them sweetly.

But while he sang he posed.

And so he got tired.

He thought that he was tired of singing.

But he was only tired of posing.

Next door to Billy's studio was Betty's studio.

Betty was one of those who painted.

She painted miniatures.

She couldn't help it.

She was white and willowy, and her hair was red and her eyes were green.

She wore earrings.

She painted women and children.

And she painted them prettily.

But while she painted, she, too, posed.

And so she, too, got tired.

She thought that she was tired of painting.

But, like Billy, she was only tired of posing.

Billy looked about his studio.  
It was all littered with music.  
Billy sighed.

Betty looked about her studio.  
It was all littered with paints.  
Betty sighed.

Billy went next door, to Betty.

"Come in," said Betty.

Billy went in.

"Sit down," said Betty.

Billy sat down.

Billy toyed with his rings.

Betty toyed with her earrings.

"What is it?" said Betty.

"I don't know," said Billy.

"You don't know—what?" said Betty.

"I don't know—anything," said Billy.

"Neither do I," said Betty.

"I sing and sing and sing—and I'm tired of it!" said Billy.

"And I paint and paint and paint—and I'm tired of it!" said Betty.

"I don't see why I should continue singing," said Billy.

"And I don't see why I should continue painting," said Betty.

"But if I don't sing, I don't know what I'll do!" said Billy.

"And if I don't paint, I don't know what I'll do!" said Betty.

"I'm misunderstood," said Billy.

"So am I," said Betty.

"And I'm lonely," said Billy.

"So am I," said Betty.

"How strange!" said Billy.

"Isn't it!" said Betty.

"You're misunderstood, and I'm misunderstood," said Billy.

"And you're lonely, and I'm lonely," said Betty.

"Let's be lonely together!" said Billy.

"But if we're together—we won't be lonely!" said Betty.

"That's so!" said Billy. "Then, let's be misunderstood together!"

"But if we understand one another—we won't be misunderstood!" said Betty.

"That's so, too!" said Billy. "I'll understand you, and you'll understand me."

"I'll understand your singing, and you'll understand my painting," said Betty.

"We'll encourage one another!" said Billy.

"We'll work together!" said Betty.

"We'll—we'll *live* together!" said Billy.

"Oh, this is so sudden!" said Betty.

"Everything the Artistic Temperament does is sudden," said Billy. "The more sudden, the more artistic.

I am sad suddenly, and I am glad suddenly. I sing suddenly, and you paint suddenly. How soon shall we have our two studios knocked into one?"

"As soon as the ceremony is performed," said Betty.

"As soon as the—*what*—is performed?" said Billy.

"The ceremony," said Betty.

"What ceremony?" said Billy.

"The marriage ceremony," said Betty.

"Oh!" said Billy.

"Let us go through with it now," said Betty. "Don't let us delay; don't let us consider. Let the unexpected happen. Let us express our Temperament. Let us be Artistic!"

And Betty smiled sweetly.

"All right," said Billy.

And Billy scowled sullenly.

And so they went out to a little church around the corner and found the minister and were married, and then went back to the studio building and made arrangements for having the two apartments knocked into one.



## THE WATCHDOG

By JOHN KENDRICK BANGS

**Y**OUR Critic is a watchdog for all things—

For books, and plays, for powder puffs, and kings—

So blame him not because 'tis his delight

To growl and bark, and now and then to bite.

That's what he's for. The poet spoke but true

Who said he bit, since "'twas his nature to."

And when his whine sounds loudest on the air,

Lock up your doors and windows with much care.

'Tis pretty safe to gather from that sound

There's geniuses around.

# THE PAINTER OF DEAD WOMEN

By EDNA WORTHLEY UNDERWOOD

WE were lingering over one of our honeymoon breakfasts in Naples, my husband dividing his attention between *Il Corriere di Napoli* and his coffee, and I planning for my favorite pastime, swimming, in that sea which looks like a liquid sapphire.

"No clue to the mysterious disappearance of the Contessa Fabriani," he read. "After a month's search the police are baffled.

"That does not sound particularly remarkable to you, I suppose. Women—and men, too, for that matter—have disappeared from other cities. But this adds another chapter to a mysterious story of crime. For twenty-five years, not only native Italian women, but visiting women of other nations have disappeared from Naples and nothing has afterward been heard of them. The peculiar part about it is that they have all been young and beautiful and women of the upper class."

I paid little heed to his words. I was thinking of other things. Besides, Luigi was a Neapolitan and interested in all the happenings of his native city. On my first visit to Naples I did not have time to interest myself in a sensational story such as I could read any morning in the London papers.

"You haven't forgotten that this is the night of the ball?" he said suddenly, consulting his watch and jumping up. "I want you to look particularly lovely. All my friends—and your old rivals—will be there. Business takes me from the city for the day, and, in case I should not return in time to accompany you, I have arranged for Cousin Lucia to meet you at ten at the

door of the Cinascalchi Palace. I shall come later—in time for part of the dancing. Tell Pietro to get you there at exactly ten," he called out after he had kissed me good-bye.

When I took a last look at myself in the glass that night I felt that I had obeyed my husband's instructions. I was looking particularly lovely. I had dressed with the purpose of appearing as unlike Italian women as possible.

My slim six feet of stature was arrayed in a plain white satin princess gown, from which the shoulders rose scarcely less white and satiny. My hair was the color of the upland furze, and my cheeks glowed like the roses of an English garden.

"Pietro!" I called, after we had driven what seemed to me a very long time. "Are you sure that you are going in the right direction? I did not suppose that it was outside the city."

He reassured me and drove on. We entered the courtyard of a country estate. As I stepped from the carriage I saw in the distance the grouped lights of Naples. Pietro whipped the horses and drove off before I had time to speak.

There were no other carriages in the yard. Could I have mistaken the time? Lucia was not there to meet me, either. She was probably within, I reflected, since the palace was bright with light.

Doors swung back softly, as if by magic, and I entered. The blaze of light that rushed out all but blinded me. Words cannot express the horror of it nor of the silence that accompanied it. There were no servants moving



about. No one was in sight. I was alone.

Imagine a sweep of majestic rooms whose floors were polished to the surface consistency of stone; straight white walls of mirrored marble, and, blazing from walls and ceiling, prisms of cut crystal. Wherever you looked, the glitter of light flashed back at you, confusing your eyes and dazing your brain. I did not suppose that light could hold such terror.

"There is surely some mistake," I whispered. "This is no place for dancing or merriment. It is more like a white and shining sepulcher. I would rather trust myself to the night outside," turning toward the door with the purpose of leaving.

But the space behind, where I knew I had entered, presented a smooth and even paneled surface. There was no door. Nor was there place for lock or knob. As I stood confused and hesitating, I learned to the full the demoniac power of light. The slightest motion of my body, my head, my breathing, even, sent from polished corner and cornice quivering arrows into my eyes. The mirrors and the shining marble reflected floor and ceiling until it was impossible to tell where one left off and the other began. It seemed, after a time, that I was floating head downward in a sea of light.

Then something righted me sharply. It was not sound nor was it thought. It appealed to subtler senses. It was as if the material body was endowed with a thinking machine and each pore contained a brain. It aroused some consciousness which the hypnotism of light had dulled.

I knew then that I was standing slim and white and frozen with terror in the focus of the light.

I felt the cold diamonds shift their position upon my throat and breast and tremble as I breathed irregularly. I heard the sibilant slipping of the stiff satin as it fell into a changed position.

A powerful and dominant brain had touched my own. For one unconscious moment it had ruled it and set upon it the seal of its thought.

Such a passion of fear assailed me that it seemed as if I must choke.

My fascinated eyes turned toward the end of the farthest room. From there the message came. There, I knew, was something compelling, something electric. Exactly in the center of that far room and very erect stood a man. He was coming toward me, too, slowly, very, slowly—yet I heard not the slightest sound. Evidently he was shod with rubber. He moved as I have seen a malevolent spider move toward a prisoned fly, slowly, enjoying the pleasure of motion, because he knows that there is no escape. Just so gracefully and easily did he move toward me. And as he came I knew that he read my soul, measured my strength and my powers of resistance, and at the same time admired the white erectness of my body.

Fear, as with a bitter acid, etched his picture on my brain. He was very tall—taller than I by a good inch—and faultlessly attired. A patrician, but a degenerate patrician, the body alone having preserved marks of its ancient dignity.

Ribbon decorations brightened his coat, and I saw a garter on his leg. He was thinner than anyone I ever saw, and correspondingly supple. His movements had the fascination of a serpent's. Thus might a serpent move if its coiled length were poised erect.

His head would have been beautiful, had not the features been so delicately chiseled that strength and nobility had been refined away and in their place had come effeminacy and a certain cold and delicate cruelty.

He was an old man, too, and his heavy hair was white. His brows, however, were black and youthful, and from beneath looked out blue eyes. The eyes were the color of light when it shines through thick ice. They were the color of the sharp edge of fine steel when it is bared too quickly to the sun. In the same hard way the light ran across them.

But the strangest part was that there seemed to be no limit to their depth. However far you looked within, you

could find nothing. You could not surprise a consciousness. There was no soul there. In its stead there was merely a keen and destructive intelligence.

I realized that the man coming toward me did not live by means of the physical acts of life. He had learned to live by his brain; he was a cerebral.

I sensed his dominant personality and struggled against it. I sensed the presence of a numbing mental fluid that crippled my will and dulled my brain, as does that sweet smelling death which surgeons call the anesthetic.

He had stripped himself of human attributes. He knew nothing of fear, pity, love.

"I have the honor of meeting, I believe, the bride of the Leopardi," he said, bowing and speaking in an even, unemotional voice.

I bowed in return. "How is it possible for you to know that? I do not remember having met you."

"It is not necessary to have met me. No beautiful woman comes to Naples whom I do not know. I"—he bowed again—"am Count Ponteleone, Painter of Dead Women. You have probably heard of me."

"Who has not?" I exclaimed, somewhat reassured and wondering that this could be the man whose name was resounding through two continents.

"This intrusion—which I beg you to pardon—is due to the coachman's mistake. I am expected at the Cinascalchi ball. My husband and cousin await me there. If you will send me on in your carriage I shall be grateful."

"Oh, no; your coachman made no mistake," he responded, calmly ignoring my request. "I brought him here, and you, too, as I have brought other women—by this," tapping his forehead.

"You are graciously jesting to excuse my rudeness," I managed to stammer, summoning the ghost of a smile.

"Well, we may as well call it a jest if you wish. It is a jest which ought to flatter. I entertain only beautiful women here."

The glance that accompanied this

enveloped me from head to foot. It was a glance of admiration, and yet, in it there was none of the desire of would-be love. It was devoid of warmth and emotion. Nothing could be more impersonal. No mark of material beauty had escaped it. It was the trained glance of a connoisseur which measures accurately. I might have been a picture or a piece of furniture.

I felt that he knew my racial standing, my rank as a human animal, by the delicate roundness of my bones and the fine fiber of my flesh. I had been as glass to his intelligent gaze. Somehow, then, I felt that the body of me belonged to him because of this masterly penetration which substance could not resist.

"Since you are to be my guest, we might seek a more comfortable place to converse."

He led the way to the center of the great rooms, where, touching an invisible spring, doors flew back disclosing a drawing-room draped in red. As he bowed me to a seat he remarked: "Here you look like a pearl dropped in a cup of blood."

I, too, thought that I had never seen so wicked a red nor one so suggestive of luxurious crime. The comparison jarred upon me and prickled me with fear.

As he sank back in an easy chair opposite, I saw how the red walls touched with color the whiteness of his hair and sent occasional ruddy gleams into the depths of his eyes.

"You are an Englishwoman, too," he observed with evident relish. "I knew it. Only the mists and rains of England can paint color like yours."

"Did you notice how well we looked together as we walked along between the mirrors? Are we not as if made for each other—tall and regal, both of us? What a picture we would make!"

It occurred to me then with unpleasant appropriateness that he was the painter of *dead* women.

"It is an Englishwoman, too, that I lack for my collection," he mused meditatively.

"Collection! Have you a collection

of women? That is certainly unique. I have heard of collections of bugs, birds—but women, never. Perhaps you would like me to join it!”

“Indeed I would! I never saw a woman I admired so tremendously.”

I drew back in fear, silenced by the ardor of his words.

“Oh, you need not be afraid! I am not like other men. I do not love as they love; I love only with my brain. While you have been sitting here I have caressed you a thousand times and you have not even suspected it. I do not want the bestial, common pleasures which my coachman can have or my scullion can buy with a quarter. Why should not I be as much superior to them in my loves as in my life? If I am not, then I am not their superior in any way. My pleasures are those of another plane of life, of a brain touched to keener fire, of nerves that have reached the highest point of pleasurable vibration. Besides, when I love, I love only *dead* women. Life reaches its perfection only when death comes. Life is never real until then,” he added.

“Perhaps you would like to kill me for your amusement tonight,” I replied, still trying to keep up the jest. “I have always flattered myself, however, that I was better alive.”

No sooner were the words out than I regretted them. His face grew thin and strained, like that of a bird dog on the scent. His lips became expressive of a terrible desire and his frail hands trembled with anticipation.

As I looked, his pupils disappeared and his eyes became two pools of blue and blazing light. Unwittingly I had hit upon his object. I had surprised his purpose in a jest.

Who could have dreamed of this? At the worst, I thought I might be detained for two or three days, forced to serve him as a model and cause worry to my husband and gossiping comment.

But whose imagination could have reached this? Strangely enough, the decree of death that I read in his face cooled the ardor of my fear. I became calm and collected. In an instant I

was mistress of myself and ready to fight for my life. The blood stopped pounding in my brain. I could think with normal clearness.

The worst of it was, I reflected, this man was not mad. If he had been, I might have been able to play upon some delusion for freedom. He had passed the point where madness begins. He had gone just so much too far the other way.

“Then you really think that you could love me if I were dead!” I laughed, leaning toward him gaily. “Isn’t it rather a strange requisite for winning a woman’s love? What would my reward be? Are you sure you could not endure me any other way?”

“Do not jest about sacred things. Death,” he answered slowly and reprovingly, “is the thing most to be desired by beautiful women. It saves them from something worse—old age. An ugly woman can afford to live; a beautiful woman cannot. The real object of life is to ripen the body to its limit of physical perfection, and then, just as you would a perfect fruit, pluck and preserve it. Death sets the definite seal upon its perfection—that is, if death can be controlled to prevent decay. And that is what I can do,” he added proudly, rising in his thought abstraction and pacing up and down the room. “And what difference does it make what day it comes? ‘All days march toward death.’”

I admired unreservedly the elegant, intellectualized figure, now that I had thrown fear to the winds.

“Come,” he pleaded, “let me kill you! It is because I love you that I ask you. It is because I think that your physical self is worth being preserved. Your future will be assured. You will never be less happy than now, less lovely, less triumphant. You will always be an object of admiration.”

What a magician you are to picture death attractively! But tell me more about it first.

Joy leaped up and sang in my heart at the prospect of the struggle. I felt as the race horse feels when, knowing the strength and the suppleness of his

limbs, he sees the long white track unfold before him.

"In ancient days," he began, "my ancestors were Roman governors in Spain. At the court of one of them, Vitellius Ponteleone, lived a famous Jewish physician—in old Spanish days the Jews were the first of scientists—by name Ibn Ezra. He made a poison—poison is not the right word; I regret greatly its vulgar suggestiveness—from a mineral which has now vanished from the face of the earth. This poison causes a delicious, pleasurable death, and at the same time arrests physical decay. Now if you will just let me inject one drop of it into that white arm of yours you will be immortal—superior to time and change, indestructibly young. You do not seem to realize the greatness of the offer. For this honor I have selected you from all the women in Naples."

"It is an honor, of course; but, like a proposal of marriage, it seems to me important, and to require consideration."

"Oh, no, it is not important. We have to prepare for life, but for death we are always ready. Besides, I am offering you a chance to choose your own death. How many can do that?"

"Do not think that I am ungrateful, good Count, but—"

"One little drop of the liquid will run through your veins like fire, cutting off thought and all centers of painful sensation. Only a dim, sweet memory of pleasant things will remain. Gradually, then, cells and arteries and flesh will harden. In time your body will attain the hardness of a diamond and the whiteness of fine marble. But it is months, years, before the brain dies. I am not really sure that it ever dies. In it, like the iridescent reflections upon a soap bubble, live the shadows of past pleasures. There is no other immortality that can equal this which I offer.

"Every day that you live now lessens your beauty. In a way, every day is a vulgar death. It coarsens and overcolors your skin, dulls the gold of your hair, makes this bodily line or

that a bit too full. That is why I brought you here tonight, at the height of your beauty, just as love and life have crowned you."

"It must be a remarkable liquid. Let me see it. Is it with you?"

"No, indeed. It is kept in a vault which requires an hour to open. It is guarded as are the crown jewels of Italy," he responded proudly.

There was no immediate danger, I thought. There was time. Now the road lay long before me.

"I suppose there is an antidote for—this liquid; I will not call it poison, since you dislike the word so greatly."

"None that is known now. You see, it destroys instantly what only patient nature can rebuild."

"I am greatly interested in it. Show me the other women upon whom you have tried it. I am eager to see its effect."

"I knew you would be. Come this way."

We ascended a staircase, where again I felt the sting of lights. Upon a landing, halfway up, he paused and pointed to our reflected figures.

"Are we not as if made for each other, you and I? When I sleep the white liquid sleep I shall arrange that it be beside you."

My death evidently was firmly determined upon.

At the top he unlocked a door and we entered a room where some fifty women were dancing the minuet. Above them great crystal chandeliers swung, giving to their jewels and their shimmering silks and satins reflected life. Each one was in an attitude of arrested motion. It was as if they had been frozen in the maddest moment of a dance. But what a horrible sight—this dance of dead women—this mimic merriment of death!

"You know my picture of this scene, do you not?" he said, turning on more light. "They were perfect models, I can assure you. I can paint them for hours in any light."

"When I die I shall bequeath to Naples this art gallery. Will it not be a gift to be proud of? Nothing can

surpass it in uniqueness. Then the bodies of these women will have attained the hardness and the whiteness of fine marble. They can in no way be distinguished from it except by their hair.

"Of course, now, if the outside world knew of this, I should be punished as a murderer."

How firmly it was settled in his mind that the outside world was to be mine no more!

"But then I shall be revered as a scientist who preserved for posterity the most perfect human specimens of the age in which he lived. I shall be looked upon as a god. It is as great to preserve life as it is to make it."

The next room we entered was a luxurious boudoir. Before an exquisite French dressing table sat a woman, whose bronze hair swept the floor. On either side peacocks stood with outspread tails. Their backs served as a rest for a variety of jeweled hairpins, one of which she was in the act of picking up.

"That is the Contessa Fabriani. She is not yet dead. She hears every word we say, but she is unable to speak. I am painting her now. You can see the unfinished picture against the wall."

In an adjoining room a dark-skinned woman of the Orient, whose black and unbound hair showed purplish tints, was reclining upon the back of a Bengal tiger. Other Eastern women lay upon couches and divans.

"See, even in death, what enticing languor! See the arrested dreams in their dark eyes, deep as an Orient night! These women I have loved very greatly. Sometimes I have a fancy that death cannot touch them. In them there is an electric energy, the stored up indestructible ardor of the sun, which, I like to fancy, death cannot dissipate. Now here," opening another door, "I will show you an effect I have tried for years to reproduce. This has been the desire of my life."

He flung back a row of folding windows, making the room on one side open to the sea.

"It is the effect of the blended radi-

ance flung from the water here and the moon upon dull silver, upon crystal and the flesh of blonde women."

He turned out the lights. The moon sent an eerie shivering luster across the crystal and silver decorations, and touched three women in robes of white who were standing in attitudes of dreaming indolence.

"This thin, ethereal, surface light, this *puissance de lumière*, is what I have tried in vain to imprison. I have always been greedy of the difficult and the unattainable. If I could do this I should be the prince of painters. It is a fact, a real thing, and yet it possesses the magic of dreams, the enchantment of the fleeting and illusory. I wish to be the wizard of light. I wish to be the only one to prison its bright, defiant insubstantiality.

"Can you not see how wonderful it is? It is the dust of light. Reflected upon silver and clear crystal, it is what shadow is to sound. Sometimes it seems to me like a thin, clear acid; then again like some blue, sweet-smelling, volatile liquid eager again to become a part of the air.

"Have you noticed how it penetrates blonde flesh? It reveals, yet transfigures it. I wish you could watch its effect often. Sometimes the wind churns the sea light into transparent foam. Then I love its curdlike, piled up whiteness. Sometimes, when there is no moon, and only a wan, tremulous luster from the water, the light of a far star is focused on their satins, on their diamonds, struggles eerily among their laces or flickers mournfully from a pearl. The room then is filled with a regretful, metallic radiance. The stars caress them. They have become impersonal, you see, and the eternal things love them.

"When the autumn moons are high the light that fills the room is resonant and yellow. It tingles like a crystal. It gives their cold white satins the yellow richness of the heart of the peach and to the women the enticing languor of life. On such nights the moonlight is musical and makes the crystal vibrate.

"Now, tonight, the light is more like the vanishing ripple of the sea and has a vocal quality. Is it not wonderful? Look! It is the twin of silence, the ghost of light!"

In his excitement and exhilaration his eyes shone like the moon-swept sea. I knew that in them, too, slept terrors inconceivable.

"This is the room I have in mind for you. You will queen it by a head over the other women. The color of your dress is right. Your gems, too, are white. Here, some time, I promise to join you, and together we shall be immortal.

"Excuse me just a moment. Wait here. Let me get the liquid and show it to you. You will be fascinated by it, just as other women have been. I never saw one who could resist it."

As he left I heard the key turn in the lock. When we entered the other rooms I remembered that he bolted the doors on the inside. This door, then, was the only one by which he could gain entrance. Swiftly I slipped the bolt. Now I was safe—for a time, unless there was a secret entrance.

It was not far from the window to the water. I laughed with delight. I had dived that distance many a time for pleasure. I was one of the best swimmers in England, and I had always longed for a plunge in this sapphire sea. Now was my chance and life the goal to gain. I took off my satin gown as gaily as I had put it on. Like the Count of Ponteleone, I, too, admired the play of light on its piled up whiteness. How merrily the sea wind came! How it counceled courage!

I took the plunge. Down, down,

down I went, cleaving the clear water. The distance up seemed interminable. It was like being born again when at last I saw the white foam feather my arms and felt my lungs expand with air.

I swam in the direction of Naples. I could not reach the city, but I could easily reach some fisher's hut and there gain shelter.

Oh, the delight of that warm, bright water under the moon! I felt that the strength of my arms and my legs was inexhaustible. I exulted in the water as a bird in its natural element, the air.

After I had covered what I thought to be a safe distance I turned on my back and floated. Then I caught sight of the window from which I had leaped. It was brilliantly lighted. Count Ponteleone was leaning from it excitedly, his white hair shining like a malevolent flame.

Despite the distance, I could feel the power of his wild blue eyes, which sparkled like the sea. Again I dived, lest they should reassert their power over me and draw me back.

I came up under the shadow of the shore, where I made my way along until I reached a boat where Neapolitan fisherwomen were spreading their nets to dry. They took me in, and for the doubled price of a good month's fishing brought me that night to Naples.

"Ah, Luigi," I sobbed, as he folded me in his arms, "little did I think, when you spoke of the dance this morning, that I should spend the night with the dead dancing women of Ponteleone!"

"Nor I that you would solve Naples's mystery of crime."



OH, for a lodge in some vast wilderness—with two or three agreeable lodgers!



AFTER marriage, what one knows that one should not, one ceases to know. This is wisdom.

# THE WOOD FIRE

By ROSALIE ARTHUR

DEEP in the heart's core of my fire tonight  
Visions and dreams, rose red and ashen gray,  
Enveiled in magic scents of long ago,  
Float up and fade away.

The quiet murmur of the shifting flame  
Flutters like hov'ring birds close overhead;  
Voices, now faint, now rising like the wind,  
Call from old days long dead:

Lost airs that echo from my vanished youth,  
The secret songs of unforgotten years.  
My fire is blent in vague, unmeaning shape,  
Blurr'd by a prism of tears.



# REFLECTIONS OF A SPINSTER

By HELENA SHARPSTEEN

WHEN kissing becomes a fine art it ceases to be a pleasure.  
A kiss night and morning is the badge of settled domesticity.  
For a kiss to mean anything it must mean everything.

A man regards kissing as a *hors d'œuvre*; a woman regards it as a *raison d'être*.



IF Cupid is blind, Hymen has ten thousand peeled eyes.



# THE VAMPIRE CAT OF NABESHIMA\*

By FUJI-KO

*There is a belief among old time Japanese that cats, foxes and badgers are frequently evil spirits. To them was accredited the power of assuming the human forms of their victims, and thus more easily working their malignant designs upon other mortals. The "Vampire Cat of Nabeshima" is one of the most noted of these fabled monsters.*

## CHARACTERS

THE PRINCE OF HIZEN (*a Dai-myō, or war lord*)

ISAHAYA-BUZEN (*the Chief Councilor*)

GOROJO-KOJIMA (*the Chief Physician*)

ITO-SODA (*the faithful Samurai*)

MATSU-SAN (*a maid*)

THE CAT

SAKURA-KO (*the Vampire—in life, the Prince's Favorite*)

TABLEAU: "The Hour of the Mouse" (midnight), a summer night. SAKURA-KO is alone in her house, asleep. One of the sliding shutters which compose the walls of the house is slightly ajar. The interior is dimly lighted by a single lamp, which throws across SAKURA-KO's face a faint beam of light. The scene is intensely quiet for a few seconds. Then the paw of an enormous black cat appears at the edge of the sliding shutter, and begins to push it slowly and without any noise a little further open. Having done this, it creeps noiselessly into the apartment. Through the dim shadows its great black form is dimly seen, its eyes, however, gleaming with a phosphorescent light. Slowly it creeps up to the sleeping girl. An instant it stands still, looking at her, then springs at her throat. The woman gives a fearful, gurgling cry—the inference being plain that she has been killed by the "Vampire Cat."

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**S**CENE—*The house of SAKURA-KO. The sliding windows are partly open in the back, showing a view of a beautiful landscape beyond. The time is the "Hour of the Bird" (sunset). The sky is suffused with a golden glow, which quickly deepens into the crimson of the setting sun, fading gradually into the purple of night. It is the day following the killing of the Favorite by the Vampire Cat. The cat has learned that the PRINCE is in the habit of visiting SAKURA-KO at this hour, and has, by reason of its legendary power of entering into the bodies of its victims, assumed the form and voice of the late Favorite.*

SAKURA-KO (now the VAMPIRE) is discovered sitting on a pillow, twanging in a desultory manner at a Japanese banjo. Her attitude and expression are, however, alert and listening, as though she expected someone.

The PRINCE enters from the garden. He comes buoyantly toward her.

PRINCE

The hours have lagged for me, Sakura-Ko, as for a sick man watching for the first blossoms of the plum tree, until the cares of office should release me to your tender arms, my sweet flower of love.

VAMPIRE

Thank you. Is the health of my honorable lord very good?

PRINCE

Thank you. It is very good, Sakura-Ko. Is my sweet lady's health augustly good?

VAMPIRE

My insignificant health is very good. Is the health of your mother, and your honorable parents-in-law, and your illustrious brothers and sisters, and your honorable aunts and uncles very good?

PRINCE

They are augustly well.

VAMPIRE

Is the health of the children of your illustrious brothers and sisters and the health of your august cousins very good?

PRINCE

They are honorably well.

*The (VAMPIRE claps her hands. A maid appears and makes obeisance.)*

VAMPIRE

Matsu-San, bring tea and sugared beans.

*(The maid bows and goes out.)*

Beautiful is the honorable sunset, my lord.

PRINCE

Lovelier far is the rose bloom of your face, sweet lady.

VAMPIRE

Thank you. She who speaks with you is augustly insignificant, and her manners honorably rude.

*(MATSU-SAN reenters with a tray bearing a teapot, Japanese cups and saucers and some little cakes. She places the tray before her mistress. The VAMPIRE pours a cup of tea, and bowing, offers it to the PRINCE.)*

PRINCE

Thank you, my sweet Cherry Blossom. How pass you the long hours of the day, Sakura-Ko?

VAMPIRE

I feed my pretty gold fish. I play at *samisen* and *koto*. I write a poem to the honorable iris flower. I count the minutes until the "Hour of the Bird" shall come. I watch impatiently for the first crimson flag of sunset, the signal which I know shall bring you to my arms, my sweet Prince.

PRINCE

Sakura-Ko, this very night shall I cause double offerings of red rice and incense to be made to Kwannon-Sama, who sent to me your incomparable

charms when all else caused me weariness of spirit.

*(The maid brings in the lamps and, after placing them appropriately, retires.)*

VAMPIRE

Thank you. So large is the happiness of your words, my heart fills me with sweet pain. *(She leans forward and takes the hand of the PRINCE.)* But—does aught evil trouble my dear Prince? Did he not say his honorable health was very good?

PRINCE

There is a strange heaviness in the air. And why do the sunset hues fade so quickly into the black robes of night? Even your face, my Blossom, looks dark and strange! What is this fear which suddenly fills me? Am not I the Daimyo of Hizen? Have not I proved my hand strong to wield the sword of my fathers? Have not I conquered the enemies of the Son of Heaven? *(They both make obeisance, the VAMPIRE with a slightly scornful manner.)* Have not the gods given to me the fairest flower that blooms? *(With an expression and gesture as if trying to throw off the lethargy which he feels creeping over him.)*

Sing to me, I pray you, Sakura-Ko, a song of love. Perchance the music of your voice will dispel the cold mists of doubt and fear—of what, I know not—which throw their shadows o'er my heart.

VAMPIRE

Yes, I will sing to you, sweet Prince, of Love—beautiful young Love, which yet is cruel as the grave!

*(She croons a weird little song. The PRINCE's head droops; his whole attitude portrays intense weariness and depression. As she finishes the song, he makes an effort to arouse himself.)*

PRINCE

Sweet lady, pardon, I pray you, my discourtesy in leaving you so soon. I would retire to my own apartments. Heavy are my eyes as thunder clouds of June. I would prove poor company for one so fair and bright.

*(He sways slightly, and his eyes close. He opens them heavily. The VAMPIRE takes his hand, and presses it to her lips.)*

January, 1910—9

VAMPIRE

Dear lord, leave me not so soon.

No other can love or serve you like poor Sakura-Ko. Lie here, sweet Prince; and by augustly cool air be pleasantly fanned. Then you will very quickly get well.

*(She runs to a screen, draws therefrom a thick wadded quilt, and folds it double on the floor. The PRINCE sinks down heavily, and immediately falls into a deep stupor. The VAMPIRE loosens slightly the robes about his neck. She then lies down beside him, as though to embrace him. Placing one arm under his head, she throws the other across his breast, and presses her mouth to his throat. She is startled by a slight noise. She starts up, but nothing is to be seen. She looks about fearfully and with suspicion, then, seeing nothing, takes out a small paper handkerchief, which she presses to her lips. Her face has now changed its expression; it is wicked and cruel. She removes the handkerchief and looks at it fixedly; it shows a small red stain!)*

The noise which startled the VAMPIRE was caused by ITO-SODA, the Samurai, or favorite body soldier of the PRINCE. Wishing to speak with his master on a war matter of importance, he had approached unheard, and had gazed, spell-bound, at the whole scene from the time the PRINCE had complained of heaviness and fear. As the woman lay with her face pressed close to the throat of the PRINCE, he realized that she was a vampire, and had involuntarily drawn his sword, intending to attack and kill her, when she, startled by the sound, sprang up. Concealing himself still further behind the shutters, he scarcely breathes as she presses the handkerchief to her lips. As she removes it, he also sees the red stain. He starts with horror, then, as though struck by a sudden thought, moves quickly and silently away.)

VAMPIRE

It is very good! I send now for Isahaya-Buzen, the Councilor. Even shall I send for Gorojo-Kojima, the Chief Physician. Blind fools both! They will honorably wonder, and be augustly affrighted. They will ask of me to

tell to them how this strange thing has happened. Then will I make tears at them—poor Favorite! But within I shall laugh! It will be great joy—sweet as cakes of red beans to little ones!

*(The VAMPIRE claps her hands. The little maid appears.)*

VAMPIRE

Matsu-San, make great hurry. Summon the Chief Councilor and Chief Physician, and say to them the Lady Sakura bids them augustly condescend to come quickly to her. Say to them a strange illness has fallen suddenly upon the Prince, their master. *Hi! Hyaku!* *(Stamping her foot.)* Make great haste! Hurry!

*(When the maid has gone, the VAMPIRE looks gloatingly at her victim an instant, then paces excitedly up and down the apartment in a catlike manner. As she hears hasty footsteps, she runs again to the PRINCE and adjusts his robe. The Chief Councilor, ISAHAYA-BUZEN, and Chief Physician, GOROJO-KOJIMA, come running excitedly in. The PHYSICIAN runs at once to his master's side, feels his brow and heart, lifts up his eyelids and peers into his eyes. He then takes a small phial from his sleeve, pours a portion therefrom into one of the small cups on the tray near him, but, as he is just about to administer the potion, stops and listens to SAKURA-KO's answer to ISAHAYA, the Councilor.)*

CHIEF COUNCILOR

What is this strange seizure? What ails our august master? Tell to us all you know. Speak, and quickly, lady.

VAMPIRE

Truly, honorable sirs, I know not what dreadful thing has happened to my Prince! He said he felt a great heaviness of the air; then he fell asleep. I call at him—I beg him speak with me, but he answers not at all! Kind sirs, make him quickly well, I pray. If bad shall come to my dear lord, poor Sakura's heart shall wither and die, as flowers of the ume tree which bloom too soon!

*(The CHIEF PHYSICIAN forces the contents of the cup down the throat of the PRINCE. He is now joined by the COUN-*

*CILOR, who kneels at the other side of the PRINCE, at whom they both gaze intently.)*

CHIEF COUNCILOR

What, think you, ails our august master, Gorojo? This sudden seizure is passing strange!

CHIEF PHYSICIAN

It is indeed strange, Isahaya-Buzen, since it is now but the "Hour of the Bird"—too early to be honorably overcome with rice wine. Yet had I grave fears, Isahaya, for the health of our master but yesterday, as I sat at his honorable right hand, while he augustly partook of repast.

CHIEF COUNCILOR

What say you, Gorojo-Kojima? I noticed naught unusual. But the wine was excellently well flavored, and I was excessively engaged.

CHIEF PHYSICIAN *(with sarcasm)*

Many strange and wondrous things have I seen and heard during a long court life; yet methinks the strangest and most wondrous would be that an honorable Chief Councilor should, perchance, perceive a passing truth which babes might read! Yet, of all things I admire most your august wisdom, Isahaya-Buzen! *(bowing).*

*(The CHIEF COUNCILOR, a very stupid old man, but extremely vain and pompous, has looked rather suspiciously at the PHYSICIAN during the first part of this speech. His vanity is hugely flattered by the latter part, which he does not realize is sarcasm, and he replies graciously.)*

CHIEF COUNCILOR

Gorojo-Kojima, your words are grateful to my spirit as rain to rice fields in time of drought.

CHIEF PHYSICIAN

Methinks our august master honorably overate. I looked upon him, I confess, with a fearful heart (yet, as I value my insignificant life, I dared not to speak), as, after twelve bowls of tea, with sweetmeats, he partook immoderately of custard soup; also fish soup, with honey and seaweed; minced raw fish; also fish boiled with lotus-roots and soy in liqueur; mountain whale and radishes; sea-slugs served with vinegar; pickled cabbage leaves; eight bowls of honorable rice; rice cakes with pickled

beans and sugared oranges; and seventeen cups of honorable sake.

(CHIEF COUNCILOR *somewhat doubtfully, with pursed up lips, his head on one side*)

Methinks I would call that but a moderate repast, Gorojo. Yet (*thoughtfully*) perchance for one young and unseasoned, as our master, it was overmuch!

(*The CHIEF PHYSICIAN looks at the CHIEF COUNCILOR somewhat scornfully, as if greatly doubting his alleged wisdom. He leans forward, and shakes a forefinger impressively at ISAHAYA.*)

CHIEF PHYSICIAN

All has not yet been told, honorable councilor. I feared for the welfare of our Prince even today, when he augustly disregarded my insignificant counsel to indulge in not more than nine sittings in his bath, in water of extreme heat!

CHIEF COUNCILOR (*with sarcasm*)

Truly, Gorojo-Kojima, your august skill almost should raise the dead! You have administered to the Prince a healing draught, doubtless?

CHIEF PHYSICIAN

Truly, I have already administered unto him ginseng from Corea—a compound of powdered lizards' tails, mixed with fluid of the Burning Herb—a most *potent* remedy! I shall watch here until the draught takes effect, and beg you, Isahaya-Buzen, to condescend to bear me company.

CHIEF COUNCILOR

That is well spoken, Gorojo. We will keep faithful watch, in order that no possible witchcraft or sorcery shall possibly touch our master. I have heard, Gorojo (*leaning forward mysteriously, and rolling his eyes in a frightened manner*) the Vampire Cat of Nabeshima has again been seen lurking, in the guise of a beautiful young female, at the foot of the mountain.

CHIEF PHYSICIAN (*with interest*)

How know you that it was the Vampire Cat, Isahaya?

CHIEF COUNCILOR

A holy priest of Kwannon, on his way to the shrine, was accosted by the maiden, who was weeping bitterly.

Forewarned by the Goddess, he stoned the maiden, who thereupon changed again into the Cat, and fled, with terrible cries of rage and pain, into the mountain.

(*They both shiver slightly, and draw a little more closely together. The VAMPIRE partly covers her face with her sleeve, to hide the evil smile which flits over her face at these words.*)

CHIEF PHYSICIAN

Isahaya, I propose that we again question the Lady Sakura.

(*He looks at the Favorite, who has all the while been kneeling humbly on the mat at the feet of the PRINCE, whom she has been watching with apparently great solicitude, but listening all the time to the PHYSICIAN and the COUNCILOR.*)

CHIEF PHYSICIAN

Have you noted aught amiss with your lord of late, Sakura-Ko? Has his spirit been as gay, his love as warm and tender?

VAMPIRE

Warm as honorable south wind my sweet lord's love to Sakura-Ko! Soft as spring twilight his tenderness. Yet, Gorojo-Kojima, I think for many moons some secret grief troubles the heart of my Prince. Oftentimes he looks at me so sadly, his eyes (*here she leans forward and gazes straight into the eyes first of the CHIEF PHYSICIAN and then of the CHIEF COUNCILOR*) deep, dark pools at twilight time. *Aita!* He takes my hand so (*here she seizes the hand of the CHIEF PHYSICIAN*), and seems with his gaze to search my soul—like a-this.

(*She raises the hand of the CHIEF PHYSICIAN to her lips. He struggles hard to shake off the strange feeling of heaviness and fear which he feels creeping over him—a paralysis of both mental and physical system. He looks somewhat fearfully and appealingly at the CHIEF COUNCILOR, who is nodding.*)

CHIEF PHYSICIAN

My eyes are heavy! Yet the hour is not late—I must not sleep!

(*He yawns heavily, nods, starts and rubs his eyes. He looks at the CHIEF COUNCILOR, who is fast asleep, or rather in a sort of stupor, and breathing heavily.*)

When the VAMPIRE has succeeded in getting both under her evil spell, she turns again to the PRINCE, and is about to lie down beside him. At this instant the Samurai, ITO-SODA, returns. He enters from the garden, as before, and appears to conceal some object in his robe. The VAMPIRE sees him immediately this time, and draws herself up angrily.)

VAMPIRE

Truly, Ito-Soda, what do you here? Why do you come like a thief? You disturb my honorable grief.

SAMURAI

Augustly condescend to forgive me, fair lady. I but came to beg the privilege of watching, with Gorojo and Isahaya-Buzen, over my honorable master.

VAMPIRE

You are a most faithful Samurai, Ito-Soda. But I have not need for you—return quickly, I pray, to other Samurai. I, Sakura-Ko, will keep faithful watch over my most dear lord.

(The SAMURAI points to the two sleeping men beside the PRINCE.)

SAMURAI

How is it, Sakura-Ko, that these honorable gentlemen are asleep? Could they not watch by my master's side a few hours? Oya! Truly, this is passing strange!

(The SAMURAI approaches the CHIEF PHYSICIAN, and shakes him by the shoulder, but fails to arouse him. He takes hold of the hand of the CHIEF COUNCILOR, but when he releases it the hand falls like lead. He turns again to the VAMPIRE.)

SAMURAI

Lady, I shall watch here until my master awakes. As a Samurai, this is my right. Fair lady, you must be faint with pain of heart and weariness. Will you not rest a short time? When my master awakes he would wish, I know, to see his Favorite with those honorable red cheeks which he loves. Pray rest, lady. (Looking back into the garden.) Who comes?

As the VAMPIRE turns away from him at this false alarm, he quickly takes from his robe a piece or square of oiled silk or paper and spreads it on the matting. He seats himself upon it, and unsheathing

the shorter of his two swords, thrusts it quickly into his thigh. He does this in order that the pain of the wound may keep him awake, and enable him to resist the VAMPIRE's spell. The oiled silk is to prevent the blood staining the matting. The VAMPIRE, after listening and watching a few seconds, turns and walks again toward the SAMURAI.

VAMPIRE

No one comes. Ito Soda (bowing). You are a very kind young man! You think I, Sakura-Ko, go to sleep while my lord have sickness? Truly, no! I watch over my sweet Prince. I watch with you, most loyal Samurai!

(They look steadily at each other. As she looks at the SAMURAI the VAMPIRE's face slowly changes its expression from simulated grief to a soft, adoring, pleading look. This short silence should be intense, to typify the struggle between Good and Evil which is now beginning.)

VAMPIRE

Poor, unfortunate Sakura-Ko. Thrice have the snows fallen upon the mountain and melted into spring torrents since I was brought to the yashiki of the Prince of Hizen. Thrice have bloomed the cherry-trees of Mimeguri Ferry. And again the year rolls by so sadly. Again the song of the semi, loud and sweet to others, mocks the bitterness of my heart.

(Her voice trembles slightly. She appears to suffer from some secret grief rather than with sorrow at the seizure of the PRINCE. The SAMURAI determines to humor this woman, whom he believes to be a vampire, until he sees a chance to kill her. Her words, however, puzzle him.)

SAMURAI

What mean you, lady? I am a Samurai—a man better suited to the clashing of swords than to gentle voices of women. Is not your life, as Chief Favorite and much beloved by our master, sufficient happiness?

VAMPIRE (mournfully)

Happiness! To laugh when the heart has gladness—that is good. To dance, to sing, to endure embraces of one—even though a noble Prince—when the soul is scorched and dry with the fires of secret love and longing for

another—think you that is happiness, Ito-Soda?

*(The SAMURAI is suffering intensely from his self-inflicted wound. His senses are almost reeling—yet he manages to keep control.)*

SAMURAI

Sakura-Ko, your words are wild. Read me your riddle, I pray.

VAMPIRE *(leaning toward him)*

Most noble Samurai, when Benten-Sama answers my prayers and permits me to look upon your face, the world is filled with sunshine, though the clouds hang heavy overhead. When you have passed from my sight, darkness falls, thought it be midday.

SAMURAI

Truly, a strange statement, and a most treasonable one, Sakura-Ko. Did you not harshly bid me begone but a few moments since. Whence comes this honorably sudden change, fair lady?

*(The VAMPIRE is slightly nonplused for a second, but recovers herself immediately.)*

VAMPIRE *(with feeling)*

You wrong me, good Ito-Soda! I was overcome at this strange seizure which has fallen upon my lord, and modesty forbade that I should obey dictate of my heart. *(She looks around at the silent men.)* These weak fools can neither see nor hear—at last we are alone, Ito-Soda! The gods have granted my desire.

SAMURAI

Lady, your words are treason! Cease, I pray you!

VAMPIRE

Speak not harshly with me, sweet Samurai, and my smile for you shall be always as summer dawn. Let us leave the vain court of this Prince, whose strength to yours is as water to wine. The mountain beckons to us. Let us away into the green, free world, where every bud and flower hastens to greet the rising sun—the green, beautiful world which was made for love and for us, Ito-Soda.

*(The VAMPIRE rises, and seating herself close to the SAMURAI, begins gently to stroke his face and body.—(This is typical of love in Old Japan.)—A look of in-*

*tense struggle crosses the face of the SAMURAI. He shakes her off, and seizing the handle of the knife, turns it slowly in his wound. He groans in a stifled manner, trying to choke back the sound. A small red stream trickles out on the square of white oiled silk. The VAMPIRE springs back, and from soft, voluptuous pleading her face changes to that of a frenzied fury.)*

VAMPIRE

Blood! What you do, Ito-Soda? Speak quickly!

SAMURAI

Your pardon I beg, fair lady. Fearing sleep should overtake me, as it has these honorable gentlemen, I thrust my dagger into my side, to keep awake of the honorable pain.

*(The VAMPIRE, realizing she has made a mistake, immediately regains her control. Her face again assumes its expression of love.)*

VAMPIRE

You most brave, most loyal Samurai in all Japan! Your devotion but fans the flame of my desire. Hai, gladly would I give life—beautiful life—to lie close against your true heart. And, sweet Samurai, *my bosom* you should find white snow and burning fire!

SAMURAI

Lady, by all the gods I pray you cease your tempting. The snow of your bosom would chill me—the fire would scorch my soul. I am a Samurai! Tempt me not further, I pray.

VAMPIRE

Most noble Samurai, come with me, and my love and mellowness shall quickly heal your honorable wound. We will lie upon the cold, sweet mosses, under the stealing silver footsteps of the young moon. Together we shall lie—close as the roots of an ancient tree hid deep in the bosom of the earth. My mouth is a crimson flower on which the honeybee has stopped. It is ready to bloom for you! Will you not taste its sweetness, O Samurai? My breath against your cheek shall be as a whisper among the cherry blooms of Mimeguri Ferry. I'll bind you close with every lotus-scented hair.

The gods are jealous, and Death is very cruel. Yet, so warm my love,



even cold Death himself shall flee away!

(The VAMPIRE moves a little way, with pleading, outstretched arms. The SAMURAI arises, pale and shaking with emotion.)

SAMURAI (speaking as if to his own soul)

It is death—nay, far worse than death—it is disgrace! Yet her starry eyes pierce my soul with desire. Al-most would I wander desolate through ten thousand moons of the seven heavens—to lie but one hour against that bosom of mingled snow and fire! (He tries to straighten up, to shake off the horrible spell.) Yet I am a Samurai. Shall I desert my master? Nay, better death, if need be, than disgrace!

VAMPIRE

Come with me, oh, Samurai, and we shall whistle and dance to the sweet world under the moon!

(The VAMPIRE dances before him—a strange, slow dance, with weaving, beckoning hands. The SAMURAI, fascinated, is slowly drawn to her. At last, when he has drawn quite close, she stretches forth her arms, as though to be clasped in his embrace. Still he hesitates.)

SAMURAI

Ye gods, if I were but alone! But a Samurai cannot leave his master.

VAMPIRE (her brows blackening with anger at the stubbornness of her victim.)

Your illustrious master has already crossed the dark river Sandzu. You are—alone! Come—come with me!

(The dreadful import of these words seems to arouse the SAMURAI. The fascination is broken—again he is filled only with a terrible fear. He makes a

final, supreme effort. Drawing his knife from the wound with heroic ecstasy of pain, he stands erect, and, holding the knife to heaven, invokes the aid of all the gods.)

SAMURAI

Shaka!

Kwannon-Sama!

Benten-Sama!

Dai-Butsu!

All honorable gods in seven heavens, I, the Samurai Ito-Soda, call upon you to save the life of my master, the Daimyo of Hizen, and to rid the earth of this woman, whom I boldly proclaim the Vampire Cat of Nabeshima!

(The SAMURAI makes a dash at the VAMPIRE. She has cowered as if afraid under his invocation to the gods, but now springs back and wards him off, crying in a terrible voice.)

VAMPIRE

Stop! How dare you attack a court lady, Favorite of your Prince?

SAMURAI

Shaka!

Dai-Butsu! Help!

(The lights grow dim—the storm breaks. Rushing winds, wild music—lightning, thunder. All the elements are in sympathy with the terrific struggle between Good and Evil. Then the lights come up, as if a long flash of lightning. It shows weirdly on the faces of the CHIEF PHYSICIAN, the CHIEF COUNCILOR and the PRINCE. They are sitting up gazing, with pale, terrified faces, on the SAMURAI, who stands with uplifted dagger, over the prostrate body of an enormous cat.)

CURTAIN



**T**HERE are two kinds of dangerous wives: those whom other married men like, and those who like other married men.

# MAJOR BLUFFKINS'S WOOING

By WILLIAM J. LAMPTON

THE gentle reader has no doubt read in his Bible, just as readable today as it ever was, about a perverse generation and a stiff-necked people. Well, Miss Euphemia Semester belonged in that class. Of course, one must not understand that Miss Euphemia's age ran back to biblical times, albeit it was not to be considered with the irreverence of youth; but the spirit of her class had descended upon her, and she was not discrediting her ancestry. Yet, notwithstanding her obstinacy, Miss Euphemia was, in the larger virtues and graces of her sex, not to mention her material resources, the most attractive woman in Grassdale to Major Bluffkins. So assured was the Major, in mind and heart, of her superiority over all other women of his acquaintance that he had not hesitated to call her attention to the fact on frequent occasions, carefully omitting, however, any references to her material resources.

"Why is it, Major Bluffkins," she said to him one soft September night, when the silver moon hung crescent in the azure sky and the nightingale warbled in the magnolia on the velvet lawn, "why is it that you persist in talking to me as you do?"

"Do I?" he murmured with a pretty assumption of guileless innocence and in tender consonance with the sweetness of the hour.

"Yes, you do, and you are old enough to know better," she replied discordantly and with uncalled for accent on the word "old."

The Major did not know how old one must be to know better in moments of this description, but as a

purely chronological circumstance he was not young. For that matter, neither was Miss Euphemia, if one may be allowed to refer to the flight of time in connection with a spinster's years.

"I am young in spirit, Miss Euphemia," he ventured.

"Fudge, Major," she laughed utterly out of tune; "every old bachelor I know says exactly the same thing. I observe, however, that when there is any hard work to be done they do not hesitate to step aside and leave it to younger men to do. Their alleged youthful spirit seems to me to exercise itself only when a woman is around."

"There, Miss Euphemia," he cried exuberantly, "there you have touched the vital spark, the keynote of the masculine being—woman is the youth of his age; she is the hope that springs eternal in his throbbing breast; without her his past is a mockery, his present a desert, and his future a night of starless gloom. Woman is man's everlasting springtime; her smile is his sunshine; her voice is his bird song, and in her fair presence his heart and his mind blossom in vernal fragrance."

He saw Miss Euphemia's face in a wandering glint of moonlight as he closed this burst of emotional eloquence, and it was not encouraging. Miss Euphemia was in nowise sentimental, but he had hoped that she was not embarrassingly unappreciative of those nobler thoughts of a man which sometimes find expression when the depths of his better nature are stirred to their profoundest. In finishing his peroration he furtively reached forth to take her hand in his, though he would not

have done so had he seen her face before the impulse incited action. Still, one cannot always control an impulse. If one could, man would be a changed being, indeed, and woman would lose her identity.

"You must have been drinking this evening, Major," she said in cold, judicial tones, at the same time removing her hand to a less accessible location, "and you know what I think of a man who drinks to excess."

"To excess, Miss Euphemia?" he gasped, for as Heaven was his judge, he had been distressingly abstemious for some time.

"To excess," she repeated with clinching effect.

"Dear Miss Euphemia, how cruel of you!" he pleaded. "You know I signed the pledge for your sake, and on my honor as a gentleman I assure you that the continuity of my existence shall break before I break that."

"Well, I hoped as much," she conceded grudgingly; "but such language as yours can lead to but one conclusion, if I have got any sense at all, as I think I have."

It was not sense he was seeking; it was sympathy; it was some sweet response to the signals from his heart, some unison of sentiment to bring two souls together. But he could not resent her imputation without straining his gallantry to the limit of its endurance. He felt that Miss Euphemia should be cajoled rather than cudgelled, although in his innermost being he knew that it would afford him a peculiar satisfaction to take a club to her. There are some things a woman delights in saying to a man which can only be properly answered by violence.

"I am sure the character of my language is unimpeachable," he explained with the meekness of an apologist. "In fact, part of it, I may confess, now that you have seen fit to cast aspersions upon it, is from one of our most cultured writers of graceful and elegant English."

"Oh, is it?" she sniffed straight through the shimmering moonlight and the warbling of the nightingale in the

magnolia—and Miss Euphemia's sniff was always exasperating. "Perhaps it is," she sniffed, "but it sounds different from the way it reads, though I may confess, now that you have seen fit to cast aspersions upon my taste in diction, that I have never read the lines in any of the books in my library."

This was a further reflection upon his manners and methods, not to mention his ethics in quoting without giving proper credit. Miss Euphemia owned a fine library, and as president of the Grassdale Literary Society she was entitled to an opinion on literature, but that did not include a right to impugn his veracity. Her previous reflection had been cast upon his temperance principles only—principles subject to change; this latter was upon his veracity—the principles of truth are eternal, and no gentleman wants his word doubted, even by a woman. He restrained his righteous indignation by remaining silent for a full half minute.

"Perhaps not," he said with some degree of assertiveness, "but that does not prove conclusively that they do not exist except in my imagination."

"I have always understood that Major Bluffkins had a very vivid imagination," she responded with aggravating deliberation.

Another slur. Actually a scurrilous slur. Yet at such a moment resentment, except in the silent surges of his soul, was not expedient. His supreme policy was to cajole, not cudgel, Miss Euphemia Semester. Soft soap, not a baseball bat, must be his weapon in this primrose contest of Cupid. Thus doth Love make schemers of us all. He became calm to gentleness.

"Only when it wandered away into the rose gardens of ineffable delight with you, Euphemia," he whispered tenderly through the moonlit air as the nightingale struck a minor key.

Miss Euphemia stood up abruptly and shook herself. Then she sat down with emphasis.

"Well, I declare, Major Bluffkins," she exclaimed with a petulance perfectly adorable in a pestered girl, but

less so later, "you are too wishy-washy to listen to!"

"But you are listening," he urged.

"If I am, it is only because I am too polite to go into the house and leave you out here alone to chatter at the moon."

"Chatter? Monkeys chatter, I believe," the Major retorted, almost losing patience. "Am I displaying any of the traits of the simian? Pray, what do you mean?"

"Don't ask me what I mean," she snapped at him. "I want to know what you mean by talking to me as you have tonight, and on other nights, I may say, for this is not your first offense, Major Bluffkins, though tonight's is an aggravated case."

Aggravated? Indeed, it was, and Miss Euphemia was the aggravation, but she could not tell her so in so many words without periling the pursuit of his greatest happiness. What he meant must be stated differently and definitely. The time had at last arrived. Miss Euphemia was not to be left longer wandering in the wilderness of the Major's dalliance. As a military man, he knew that Fabian tactics could not be continued. He nerved himself for the onset. He ordered the charge and led the way.

"I mean, Miss Euphemia," he said, as desperate as he ever was upon those fields of military glory where he had so gallantly won his title, "I mean that I love you. That I have loved you always. I have struggled not to speak until you wished to listen, but I can struggle no more. You must listen now, for I want you to know. Dear Euphemia, listen to a heart that beats only for you, and hear the words that shall never be changed while life lasts. I love you, dear. I want you to be my wife."

"Bosh and bushel baskets, Major Bluffkins!" she laughed, so raucously that the nightingale, frightened, stilled its song. "Do you think I am a silly schoolgirl to be fooled by an old flirt like you? Your proposal, which sounds as though you had learned it in an

elocution class, is an insult to my common sense. I am positive now that you have been drinking. And, I may add, to excess."

This was more than mortal man could endure. He truly and honestly loved the lady, and never was half so sincere in all his life as in asking her to be his wife. He had, honorably and as best he knew how, paid her man's highest compliment to woman, and her reception of it was an outrage that all civilization cried out against. He revolted, and the revulsion was complete. He rose to his feet with impetuous vehemence and stood before her, resolved to demonstrate to her conclusively that the worm could turn.

"Euphemia Semester," he spoke as though in judgment, "I'm damned if you aren't the most diabolically suspicious and soured specimen of your sex that I ever talked to, and I'm done with you. You ought to marry a brute. Good night and good-bye."

He started down the steps of the piazza, where they had been sitting under a fragrant honeysuckle, Miss Euphemia making no effort to prevent his leaving in such a mood. He didn't expect that she would and he didn't want her to. His whole manly nature was thoroughly aroused and he wanted it to stay that way forever. As he reached the graveled walk, she rose. He did not look around to see, but he could hear the rustle of her skirts as she moved. There is no music in all the world more fascinating than that, most men think.

"Major Bluffkins," she called in a softer voice than he had ever heard from her, "come back, please. This is the first time I ever really and truly believed that you meant what you said to me. You need not repeat it, but don't you think you might be mistaken?"

Well, the way that nightingale sang in the magnolia, and the lambent moon looked out of the sky, and the honeysuckle—well, he *was* mistaken, that's all.

# THE EXILE

By THEODOSIA GARRISON

**A**BOVE him in the city street  
The flame of noon increased;  
With tumult, as when armies meet,  
Life urged her great and least;  
'Mid din and turmoil, dust and heat,  
Went driven man and beast.  
*He felt the salt wind on his face,  
The wet sand at his feet;  
He saw the white sails lift again;  
He heard the singing sailor men  
Above the combers' beat.*  
*Oh, half the way across the world the song came clear and sweet.*

Above the dismal lodging hung  
The heavy heat of day;  
The swarming insects buzzed and clung  
Within the gas light's ray;  
Men wrangled in an alien tongue  
Or slept as cattle may.  
*He felt the call of dew-damp fields,  
He heard the fiddles play  
The old remembered dancing tune;  
He saw the white midsummer moon,  
And mocking—luring—gay,  
The sound of one girl's laughter came from half a world away.*



## SHE SPOKE TRUTH

**"I** AM undone!" shrieked the Tragedy Queen, as she threw her arms upward  
with a wild gesture.

"Yes," agreed the Villain, as he stole a surreptitious glance behind her  
back; "two buttons at the top and three at the bottom."



**T**HE husband of a popular celebrity should be forgiven much—for he's very  
lonely.

# M ' S I E U

By EDITH M. COYLE

THE first time they met him the Americans boldly asked questions. At the second meeting they merely looked them. The little Frenchman with the ridiculously large hands answered neither their looks nor their words, and at the end of three months he was still "M'sieu" to them.

Hammond and Elkins, who were in Paris studying art, spent most of their spare time—and they had plenty of it—covering pads with sketches of M'sieu's face. M'sieu's deep set, almond-shaped eyes, with the burning light in them, baffled Hammond, and he invariably tore up the sketches as soon as they were completed. The eyes bothered Elkins, too, but he finally disposed of them, as Hammond said, by patching lids over them. It was the scar that troubled Elkins. He could never get it in the right position on the face. After an evening at the Café de Prospice, where M'sieu was always to be found, Elkins would tramp triumphantly to his quarters, declaring that it began exactly one half-inch below the bridge of the nose and ended at the lobe of the right ear. He would sketch in hurriedly the strong, determined lower jaw and the large, flexible mouth, the slightly aquiline nose and the lowered eyes. Lastly, he would do the scar. When it was transferred to paper it always looked all wrong, and Elkins would swear loudly and start another sketch.

Woods and Brown wrote for New York magazines, and were in Paris in search of local color. They introduced M'sieu into all their stories. Brown always made him a deep dyed villain,

and Woods went to the other extreme and made him a saint.

Cloyd neither painted nor wrote, but he had ideas on all subjects and especially on the subject of M'sieu and the scar. He was wont to exclaim in atrocious French: "*Cherchez la femme; cherchez la femme!*"

It was Cloyd who discovered M'sieu. One wet, disagreeable September night, the five Americans had sauntered into the Café de Prospice, ordered *café noir* and settled back in their chairs to discuss the latest news. The Café de Prospice is the great rendezvous of the chess players of Paris. At the small tables scattered throughout the room were seated men whose whole attention was centered in the game. They were men drawn from practically all classes of society, men whose interests and aims in life were vastly different, but at the Café de Prospice they met for a common purpose.

The Americans, while they sipped their coffee, talked of the latest Parisian scandal. Cloyd had many opinions to offer on the subject, but it was characteristic of the man, once having expressed his opinion, to lose interest. He attempted to change the topic and, failing, yawned frankly several times and then got up to examine at closer range a picture by a famous English artist hanging on the opposite wall. He had turned around to retrace his steps, and it was then that he had seen M'sieu for the first time. It was not M'sieu himself who had attracted Cloyd at first. It was a little brownish red dog that sat with its head on one side opposite M'sieu. M'sieu's back was toward Cloyd, and the American

stood and watched the odd pair. The man was evidently playing for the dog as well as for himself, for as Cloyd watched he made two consecutive moves. The dog, seated on the chair opposite, watched the moves gravely and seemed to understand the situation perfectly.

"By Jove," Cloyd said to himself, "that's the best ever! Brown ought to see this and write it up. He'd probably be called a nature faker for his pains, though. The dog looks rather seedy. Wonder what the old fellow looks like? The back of his head's interesting."

Cloyd moved forward a few steps, and his shadow falling on the table, M'sieu turned around quickly.

"I beg your pardon," Cloyd said. "I could not resist watching the game between you and your dog. Pray, do not let me interrupt."

"You have done that already," the Frenchman answered gravely, but with no annoyance in his tone.

Cloyd scarcely heard the remark. He was telling himself that he had never seen such a face, and was wondering how, when and where that scar had cut its way across the cheek.

The Frenchman had turned again to the dog and was talking to it in a low voice. Cloyd suddenly felt that he wanted to know this man, and he stood there vainly trying to think of something to say. There were few things that Cloyd would acknowledge, even to himself, he did badly, but chess, he frankly admitted, was beyond his ability. However, in the present instance it seemed the only means by which he could get into conversation with this man who interested him so strongly.

At this moment the Frenchman's dog, without any warning, sprang upon the table, walked across it, scattering the pawns to right and left, and dropped into his master's lap.

"Oh, Petite, Petite," Cloyd heard the Frenchman say, in a curious mixture of French and English, "*tu es fatiguée? Eh bien, eh bien*, you shall play no more."

Cloyd's opportunity had come and he moved forward.

"Will monsieur allow me to take Petite's place?"

The Frenchman evidently thought that the American had gone, for he turned with just the slightest look of surprise. "No one can take Petite's place, but you may play with me if you wish," he said after a moment of hesitation. Without a word Cloyd sat down and the game began.

Meanwhile Cloyd's friends had finished their coffee and threshed out the political discussion that had been agitating Paris for the past week.

"Wonder where Cloyd is?" Woods finally said, and rose to the height of his six feet to look over the room. He spied Cloyd almost immediately.

"By George!" he laughed. "There he is, playing chess over in the corner with a Frenchman. Let's go over and see what he's picked up."

The Americans eagerly seized upon the suggestion, and made their way in and out among the labyrinth of tables to where Cloyd and his companion sat.

"You're a nice fellow," Brown said in loud, laughing tones, "to give us the slip like that. What are you trying to do—show how badly you can play chess?"

Cloyd was secretly annoyed. He would have preferred to finish out the game alone with M'sieu. However, the four Americans seated themselves around the table, and Cloyd knew that they were there to stay. There was nothing to do but introduce them. Then, for the first time, Cloyd realized that he did not know the Frenchman's name. He would learn it now.

"Monsieur," he said, "these are my friends. May I introduce them to you?"

The Frenchman looked steadily at the four Americans for a moment, then answered quietly: "*Oui, monsieur*; I shall be glad to know your friends."

Cloyd bent forward. "Your name, monsieur—"

"You may call me 'M'sieu.' The rest does not matter," answered the



other. Cloyd drew back, hurt, but the next instant he realized that the Frenchman meant no offense. So he introduced him, and M'sieu ignored the question marks in five pairs of eyes.

Three months had passed since that first meeting and the Americans had become more and more fascinated by this man, insignificant in stature and with a face quite ordinary, if one were to except a wonderful pair of eyes and that scar on the cheek.

Tonight the five Americans sat in one of the far corners of the café and waited for the little Frenchman. He was late, and as they sat there waiting, their conversation was all of him. They had been saying the same things about him for the last three months, and yet they never grew weary of the subject. Even Cloyd's interest never flagged, although he had expressed his conjecture as to how M'sieu had received that scar at least a hundred times.

They had almost despaired of M'sieu's coming tonight, when Woods, looking up, saw him making his way to their corner. Petite was at his heels as usual. As he sat down M'sieu explained that Petite had not been well all day. "She is cross tonight," he said, picking up the little animal and placing it on his knees. For a few moments he bent over and spoke to her in a low voice, patting her with his curiously large hands.

One by one the Americans had been beaten by the Frenchman in chess. Tonight it was Wood's turn, and while M'sieu fondled Petite, the American produced the chessboard. With a final word and pat M'sieu turned his attention to the game.

He played as he always did, cautiously and with his whole heart and soul. He was oblivious to everything going on about him. The Americans had discovered that fact early in their acquaintance, and therefore did not hesitate to talk among themselves about him. Elkins, bolder than was his wont, produced a scrap of paper and a pencil, and was eagerly trying to

block in the scar on a rough sketch of M'sieu's face.

The Café de Prospice was more crowded tonight than usual. The air was so heavy with cigar smoke that the myriad of lights throughout the vast room looked hazy, as do lights through a fog. Here and there a waiter, balancing a tray on his finger tips, slipped in and out among the tables. There was a continuous click-click of glasses and a subdued hum of voices. M'sieu heard and saw nothing.

A party of three, one of them an Englishman, came and seated themselves at the next table. As he sat down, the Englishman knocked against M'sieu's chair. M'sieu kept on studying the chessboard. He had evidently not felt the jolt. His chair and the Englishman's almost touched.

Hammond was busily engaged in watching Elkins's attempts to draw the scar. Cloyd and Brown sat and idly watched the people about them, and especially the three men at the next table. A waiter brought a bottle of wine, and as he moved away they heard the Englishman say:

"The back of his head puts me in mind of— By the way, I never finished telling you chaps how that little affair with the Frenchman ended."

"Let's have the rest of it now," said one of the men. "I suppose you got the girl."

"No; she died. Mighty good thing, too. She cost me more trouble than a little. You remember my telling you that I persuaded her to go to England with me. I had convinced her that the Frenchman, Roland, had dropped her, and after that she was as meek as a lamb."

"He hadn't really, though, had he?" one of the men interrupted.

"Jove, no! He was wild about her, damn him! He was one of the quiet kind that love and hate with their whole souls. He loved her and he hated me; that's why I played him the trick. Well, to continue: I took her to England, where she grew peaked and crabbed looking. She seemed to have left all her good looks across the Chan-

nel. I soon began to grow tired of her. A woman without looks, you know, is like a tree without leaves." The Englishman guffawed loudly at the simile.

Petite, fast asleep on M'sieu's lap, grunted and moved uneasily.

"By Jove, that's it—like a tree without leaves!" the Englishman repeated. "I determined to shake her, as the Yankees say. But before I was able to do so I ran up against Roland. He had followed us to England, and he was like a devil let loose. I met him one evening as I was coming out of my quarters and"—the Englishman swallowed his wine at a single gulp—"before I parted with him I had slit his face open."

Cloyd and Brown had heard every word the Englishman had uttered. They looked at each other and then at M'sieu. His eyes were fastened on the game before him. He had heard nothing. At that moment Petite rose, yawned, stretched herself and jumped down to the floor. She passed Cloyd, snapped at his heels, and ran under the Englishman's chair. The man at this instant swung his foot back, and in doing so kicked the dog in the mouth.

Cloyd and Brown saw Petite fall back on her haunches, and the next moment spring forward and sink her teeth in the Englishman's leg just above the shoe top. With an oath the man shook the dog off, rose and pushed aside his chair. He steadied himself against the table, raised his foot and dealt the animal a fearful blow between the eyes. There was one groan from Petite, and the next instant a little brown body slid along the polished floor and disappeared under a table.

The Englishman sat down with his back to M'sieu and prepared to examine the wounds made by the dog's sharp teeth.

As Petite uttered that one groan M'sieu sprang up, pawn in hand, and, without a look in the direction of the Englishman, ran to where Petite lay. He stooped to pick her up, and as he did so the heavy, dull voice of the Englishman was heard to ask: "Who

owns the damned little beast, anyway?"

As the voice reached him, M'sieu straightened up and swung around. His face, which had been red from the exertion of the last few moments, slowly went a gray-white, except for the scar, which blazed a red and fearful streak across the cheek. He wet his lips two or three times and smiled as he did it. Petite he laid tenderly on a nearby chair. Then he walked slowly and deliberately toward the Englishman. The latter gave the handkerchief he had been winding around his leg a final twist and rose. "I say," he repeated, "who owns that damned little beast?"

"I do." The words were spoken in a low, quiet voice. The Englishman wheeled around. The smile had gone from M'sieu's face, and in its place had come a look of burning hatred.

The Englishman grasped the back of the chair he had just vacated. "My God!" he cried. "It's—"

The name he had meant to utter died in his throat. M'sieu had suddenly thrown aside the intervening chair and hurled himself upon him. He seized him by the throat with his large, powerful hands, forcing him back upon a table.

"I have found you!" he cried in his singularly perfect English, and shook him as a dog shakes a rabbit. "Now I shall kill you! *Mon Dieu*, if I could make you die a thousand deaths—"

"Good Lord!" someone at the far end of the café called out. "Stop him!" There was a general movement toward M'sieu, but the next instant, and while the dazed crowd looked on, he threw the Englishman from him, a limp and ghastly thing.

Somewhere a glass fell heavily to the floor and was broken into pieces.

M'sieu walked to where Petite lay and picked her up. He crushed the little broken body against his breast, and then turned with a bow to the Americans.

"I am Roland," he said.

Then he turned and walked out, and no one followed him.

# LE GÉNIE DES EAUX

Par JEAN REIBRACH

**L**ES Chinois, dit Jallot, assurent qu'il ne faut point secourir celui qui se noie, de peur que le Génie des Eaux, es voyant ravir sa proie, ne se retourne contre le ravisseur. Cette superstition, qui pare la lâcheté d'une fleur de poésie et de piété, ne retint point Daronde le soir où, sous ses yeux, un pauvre diable, enjambant le parapet, se jeta dans la Seine. Sans hésiter, il s'élança, rejoignit le désespéré, le ramena sur la berge; puis, laissant à d'autres le soin de le ranimer, il se hâta de se dérober à la curiosité des badauds. On l'avait reconnu, cependant. Son nom fut cité le lendemain dans les journaux; et, justement, il s'occupait à les lire, quand son domestique annonça une visite, en ajoutant:

"— C'est l'homme d'hier, que Monsieur a retiré de la Seine.

"— Faites entrer! se résigna Daronde.

"L'accueil cordial et modeste à la fois qu'il apprêtait fut glacé presque aussitôt. Il vit paraître un homme maigre, hâve, aux vêtements râpés et froissés, qui lui dit:

"— Monsieur, je vous dois, selon l'opinion commune, non seulement des remerciements, mais une reconnaissance éternelle. Ne croyez point toutefois que je vous en apporte l'expression. Je viens simplement vous demander ce que vous comptez faire pour moi?

"— Pour vous? s'étonna Daronde.

"— Oui, monsieur!

"L'homme expliqua:

"— Je vous dois la vie. Je vous la dois tout autant qu'un enfant à son père, et même davantage. Le père

donne la vie sans y songer, tandis que vous me l'avez rendue par un acte sinon réfléchi, du moins conscient et volontaire; et si le père a cette excuse de ne pouvoir prendre par avance l'avis d'une créature qui n'existe point, vous, au contraire, saviez fort bien quel était mon sentiment et que cette existence vous me l'imposiez malgré moi, contre ma volonté formelle, par force, en un mot.

"— Le débat, dit Daronde avec ironie, me semble original. Mais veuillez continuer.

"— Monsieur, reprit l'homme, j'étais un malheureux en butte à toutes les fatalités. Après des douleurs sans nom, après la ruine, la maladie, sans emploi, sans pain, je n'avais plus qu'un refuge, plus qu'un salut, la mort. C'est là une extrémité à laquelle on ne se résout pas du premier coup. J'ai lutté, j'ai espéré, désespéré de nouveau, gravi d'affreux calvaires, sué d'atroces agonies, jusqu'au moment où, réunissant enfin l'énergie nécessaire, je me suis précipité dans le néant. Donc, c'était fait! Les liens de ma misérable existence étaient dénoués. Plongé dans le coma, j'avais cessé d'être. J'étais affranchi, délivré! . . . Or, voici que le souffle de la vie me pénètre à nouveau, que ma conscience, peu à peu, se réveille. Des imbéciles tirent ma langue avec des doigts malpropres et agitent mes bras de gestes ridicules de pantin! Et j'éprouve cette horreur, cette épouvante que je vis toujours, que rien n'est fait, que tout est à recommencer! . . . Car il s'est trouvé monsieur, que vous passiez par là; que vous, qui ne m'auriez pas donné cent sous pour me sauver de la faim, vous aviez risqué votre vie

pour m'empêcher de périr; que vous, de coutume respectueux de la liberté d'autrui, vous aviez attenté en ma personne au droit sacré de tout homme à mourir, et que ce fardeau, enfin, que j'avais déposé, vous l'aviez sans pitié replacé sur mes épaules! J'ai voulu seulement justifier ma question du début; et cette question, je vous la pose de nouveau: Que pouvez-vous faire pour m'aider à supporter cette seconde existence que vous m'avez infligée?

"Un peu ébranlé, Daronde offrit:

"— Mon ami, si un peu d'argent? . . .

"— Une aumône? Non, monsieur, refusa l'homme. Gardez votre argent, qui ne saurait me mener loin!

"— Un emploi? proposa Daronde. Quel emploi?

"L'homme secoua la tête:

"— Les emplois que je pourrais remplir ne me nourriraient qu'à peine!

"— Alors? interrogea Daronde.

"Et; perdant patience:

"— Je ne vois plus, s'il en est ainsi, qu'un conseil à vous donner. Retournez où je vous ai pris!

"Sans s'émouvoir, l'homme s'inclina:

"— Ce conseil, monsieur, je l'attendais, et je crois bien que tout autre, à votre place, me l'eût donné pareillement. Il n'en reste pas moins que votre beau geste aura été semblable en ses effets au geste de l'inquisiteur suspendant, pour prolonger le supplice, la mort du supplicié. Vous m'accordez à présent de mourir, ce qui serait un grand point si là, justement, n'était la difficulté. Retourner, cela est vite dit.

Mais il faut être allé déjà pour en juger sans témérité. Je ne parle pas de la malchance qui pourrait mettre, une fois encore, un sauveteur en travers de ma résolution: tout le monde n'a pas votre héroïsme; et la vérité est que la minute est passée où j'ai pu trouver le courage de mourir. Je ne veux plus du suicide. Je veux vivre; et, pour vivre, il faut manger, sans compter le reste; toutes choses qu'à moins de mendier, ce qui est humiliant et plus aléatoire, au fond, qu'on ne l'imagine, le vol seul peut procurer avec certitude et régularité. J'y avais songé déjà, car je sais, en banlieue, des villas abondamment pourvues, qui sont isolées et désertes. J'avais eu cette faiblesse de n'oser point et de préférer la mort. M'en voici guéri! C'est vous, monsieur, qui l'aurez voulu!

"A la fin, Daronde s'emporta:

"— Eh! fit-il, allez au diable!

"Une huitaine de jours, reprit Jallot, s'étaient écoulés, et Daronde, un peu dépité d'abord, ne pensait plus à cette visite, sinon pour en rire, lorsqu'un télégramme inquiétant l'appela à Sur-esnes, où son fils, qui venait de s'établir, possédait une villa magnifique. On l'avait, pendant une absence du maître, dévalisée de fond en comble. Mais le grand malheur était que le jeune homme, rentrant précisément cette nuit-là à l'improviste, avait surpris les bandits. L'un d'eux l'avait frappé. Le fils de Daronde était mort."

— Et, demanda quelqu'un, c'était l'homme?

—C'était l'homme! répondit Jallot.



## LA VIE AU GRAND AIR

Par LUCIE DELARUE-MARDRUS

**V**VIVRE, ah, vivre! C'est au galop  
Mater une bête retive;  
C'est sentir au soleil trop chaud  
Suer et brûler sa chair vive.

# DRAMA'S TRIAL MARRIAGE WITH ART

By GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

**A**BOUT a year ago, thirty New York millionaires who were more than platonically interested in Drama rushed in where other angels had feared to tread and announced their intention of setting her up in a splendidly furnished house on Central Park West. The lease was taken out in the name of one known to them familiarly as Art, with whom theatrical neighbors living on the Great White Way were only slightly acquainted. Months passed and the news spread that Drama was getting her check in the mail every Saturday night, that she was being artistically manicured and coiffured, and that she would soon be made sufficiently respectable to be introduced by her wealthy friends to the wide circle of theatergoers.

In the meantime it had been whispered by those on the inside that the aforementioned Art had been seen entering Drama's wonderful new boudoir at all hours, and the result of this affair between the Proscenium Lady and her strange suitor became a matter of much comment among the theatrical correspondents' school for scandal. As still more months passed, the millionaire coterie that was paying the coal and gas bills became less and less of a figure in the case, for, according to all the tidbits of colloquial gossip that floated across the Park, Art was the whole thing around the dramatic flat.

In view of all this, it was but natural that I along with the others should have believed that Drama had been secretly wedded to her Art when early last month invitations were issued to

meet the happy couple at a reception in the lady's home—the New Theater. The invitations were accepted by everybody in proper curiosity, and those who gathered represented the cream of society, the cold cream of the theater and the ice cream of letters. The whipped cream, defeated in its attempt to get in, crowded the thoroughfares in the vicinity, got in the way of the taxis and waited anxiously for the news. Within the gay throng stepped on silken trains, viewed the gorgeous paintings on the ceilings and some of the faces, assured itself that Drama and Art had surely been wedded at last and then slid into the most comfortable chairs in New York to have the fact of the wedding proved to them. Being a showy audience, it naturally wanted to be shown, not individually but collectively. Missouri loves company.

Presently the lights that shone o'er fair women and slave men went down, the outside curtain went up, the inside curtains parted and the work of proof—the legalizing of the union—began. "ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA" had been chosen as the medium and Miss Julia Marlowe and E. H. Sothern were the principal spirits. It was a thrilling moment. The knights of King Art of the Round Table were about to come into their own. The first scene, disclosing Cleopatra's pillared palace in Alexandria, was a masterpiece of the painter's and builder's craft, and the promise of this premise was boundless. The romantic tragedy of Shakespeare's broadest sweep got under way and the audience craned its decolleté and poke-

collared necks to regard better the betterment of Drama since the consummation of the artistic alliance. The action passed from the stately domicile to Cæsar's house in Rome, thence to the Italian coast near Misenum, thence aboard Pompey's galley and returned anon to Cleopatra's palace. Meanwhile, however, the necks that were craning craned no more, and murmur spread round the house from pit to gilded dome that augured doubt as to whether that marriage had really taken place. Art's influence was not visible to the naked eye. In fact, Drama was not improved one bit. The third act unwound itself in Rome and Actium, and a considerable portion of the audience wound itself in cloaks and coats and went downtown to see the last part of the last act of Sam Bernard's show—for it was already well on toward eleven o'clock. The beginning of the fourth act found the auditorium still less sparsely populated and standing room in the gentlemen's café downstairs became worth its space in highballs.

Seated around the tables in this section of the new home of Thespis and wedged in like sardines against the oaken bar were, besides a goodly quota of the founders of the institution, a notable assemblage of men of prominence in the spheres of finance, letters and matrimony; and here they sat and drank in the inspiration of art and alcohol, leaving their patient mothers, wives, sisters and sweethearts upstairs to imbibe the former without the chaser. Act Five at last started up above, and the cohorts in the café formed themselves into a death watch to wait until Cleopatra should be finally stung. To them there would come at intervals a messenger from above in the shape of some heroic man who had stayed out the performance to that point, and who would inform them of the progress of the uneven contest being waged on the stage. Such was the state of affairs when, at ten minutes before one the next morning, the cry rang out on the night air: "Cleopatra is dying!" Nightcaps

were gulped in haste; check rooms were besieged; Cleopatra died. And the art lovers filed out to sleep the artistic sleep of the just and to awake—many of them—with hangovers.

Had not the official performance on the succeeding Monday night been of much the same caliber as the performance of which notice is made, it would have been discourteous, to say the least, to have looked the initial gift performance in the mouth. But, alas, "ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA" with the art sauce remained the same. Drama and Art had not been wedded after all. Theirs had been a trial marriage, and it hadn't taken. Such free love, from the dramatic viewpoint, is most expensive and least satisfactory. The effort, as the colloquial Cockney criticized it, was not even "‘ighbrow"; it was simply eyebrow—ornamental but useless.

The tragedy was done tediously and cumbrously; was dragged out and unconvincingly enacted. The critics took off their white evening gloves quickly when they handled it, and even the performance of the hitherto pedestaled Marlowe was reviewed thus by one writer:

She played the opening act in the manner of an almost rough soubrette, and her later fits of rage and her struggle with Antony amounted almost to rough and tumble. This is no exaggeration but a statement of bald, absolute fact. Of subtlety, of distinction or of dignity she showed no trace. Her Serpent of Old Nile displayed only the antics of a garter snake.

It having been definitely perceived by the producing directorate of the New Theater that Cleopatra was not the only person who had been stung in the presentation of the asp tragedy, a second production was quickly disclosed to the public. This was "THE COTTAGE IN THE AIR," a four-act fantasy by Edward Knoblauch adapted from a story by the author of "Elizabeth and Her German Garden." I outlined the story of this play in the November number of this magazine, after it had been tried out by a stock company under the title, "A Royal

Runaway," preliminary to production at the New Theater. It will be recalled that the plot has to do with a little German princess, who, believing it to be her duty to help her fellow men and women and their children; runs away from her castle on the eve of the announcement of her betrothal, takes up her life in a cottage in a small English village and finally, making a botch of all the good she has set out to do, is made to realize by her princely fiancé that, after all, her conceived "mission," like mission furniture, should be sat upon—which he proceeds to do, with the princess on his lap. And if they do not live happily ever after, at least in the New Theater version of the play, it will be all the prince's fault, for the Princess Priscilla, as portrayed by Miss Olive Wyndham, is like a Boileau painting come to life, and Boileau paintings look just as well in the breakfast room in the morning as they do in the dining room at candle glow.

"THE COTTAGE IN THE AIR," although criticized by the reviewers for its triviality, reflected much credit on the directors of the theater for the care with which they had chosen the competent cast, for the general *finesse* with which they realized the manuscript and for giving to New York theater patrons a peep at one of the most genuinely delightful stage pictures of the decade—the scene of Act II, showing the outside of Creeper Cottage, Symford, Somersetshire, England, with its cool, green lawn, its flowered hedges and the prospect beyond of the sun-bathed country road losing itself away out yonder in the dim purple of the distant hills. Mrs. Sol Smith in the role of the supposedly teetotaler invalid who is "not agin' gin", Rose Coghlan as Lady Shuttleworth, Jessie Busley as Annalise, a servant girl, Louis Calvert as the Grand Duke, Henry Stanford as the Prince, and Albert Bruning as the Princess's counsellor, were all worthy of commendation, and Miss Wyndham, as has been inferred, revealed herself to be a charmingly personalitied impersonatrix of just such a role in which

Elsie Ferguson delighted us earlier in the season.

THE third production made in the New Theater, it is a pleasure to record, showed the capabilities of the directors, and demonstrated that to be successful, good, straightforward drama, without any frills, need not be wedded to what so often is made to pass under the name of Art, but what when analyzed proves to be nothing more than impracticable and unappealing freakishness. The directors got hold of a big, strong play, "STRIFE," by John Galsworthy; they kicked dilettant Art out of the side door into Sixty-second Street; they rolled up their sleeves and brought the erstwhile wayward Drama to her senses again; and they found themselves rewarded with the praise that had been up to that time withheld. As done in the New Theater, "STRIFE" proved to be a worthy success. In its cast were included neither Marlowe nor Sothorn, who from all accounts have been enacting a little drama of their own, also known as "Strife," with the other members of the theater's stock company, whom they have sought to jostle away from the center of the stage in order to preempt that point of calcium vantage for themselves. They were not missed, however, not in the slightest degree. It is only fair to say that.

"STRIFE" is less labored than most labor plays. Unlike so many of the latter, it works while you *don't* sleep. It arouses interest and is anything but soporiferous. Those of you who are sick and tired of the plays that come under the general classification of capital and labor drama, plays that are about as true to real life as are the majority of "society" plays, go see this one. It is a refreshing change. A strike is on at the Ohio River Tin Plate Mills, and the leading figures on each of the hostile sides are, respectively, John Anthony, president of the company, and David Roberts, the strike leader. Affairs have reached a critical point and, as the curtain rises, the directors of the company are dis-



closed endeavoring to settle upon a final course of action. They vacillate, suggest a compromise, but are dominated and overruled by Anthony, who obstinately declares he will force the workmen to come to his terms if he has to fight it out on that line all summer. Roberts and Anthony are brought together. The strike leader is as stubborn as the latter. A war to the knife is declared.

Things go badly with both sides. The mills remain idle; the laborers starve. The workers, driven to desperation, seek to argue Roberts into a compromise with Anthony, but in a wild, impassioned tirade to the strikers he drowns out their appeal and urges them on in the fight. Weakened by cold and hunger, his wife dies, but Roberts, brushing away his tears, clenches his fists still harder and refuses to budge an inch. The deadlock is absolute. And then, at the very end, when both leaders are beaten, when ruin has assailed them both and eaten into the hearts and pockets of them and their weaker followers, when the opposing factions have been brought into harmony again, it is discovered that the final compromise is precisely the one that was suggested to both sides before all the trouble began. "But," says one of the characters as the last curtain falls, "that's where the fun comes in!"

"STRIFE" is powerful drama. It shoots its teaching out across the footlights with unerring aim. Compromise, it demonstrates, is as necessary to the health and progress of trade as it is to those Tenderloin playwrights whose heroines trade in it for the sake of a big third act scene and the resultant royalties. The company, including Louis Calvert and Albert Bruning as the capital and labor leaders respectively, William McVay as a sleepy director of the company, Robert E. Homans as a union delegate, and the Misses Beverly Sitgreaves, Beatrice Forbes-Robertson and Thais Lawton in the not very salient women roles, were satisfactory and efficient. Little John Tansey, whose delightful pres-

ence last year in "This Woman and This Man" made every bachelor who saw him view the possibilities of matrimony in a more desirable light, appeared in a bit of a part that he handled with his customary skill. George Foster Platt, who takes rank with Belasco as a stage producer, was responsible for the splendid production. One device of his invention, showing a real room, instead of the usual painted drop curtain, adjoining the room shown on the stage, was particularly meritorious.

RINGING out the New and ringing in the old theater for the time being, a survey of the month shows that only four new dramatic productions were made during November. Three of these were dramatizations of novels, two of the latter being by the same author, William J. Locke. The respective Lockesmiths were Roy Hornimann, who made the stage version of "Idols," and Philip Littell, who prepared "Septimus."

Although favored in Providence, where it was tried out, "IDOLS" got a devil of a reception from the critics in New York. The dramatic *descensus Averni*—the road to failure—is made easy and certain when, the morning after, reviewers employ the word "rather" in their expressions of opinion. Far better for the play if it be labeled with bluntness, even though unfavorably, than to have it characterized as "rather powerful," "rather interesting." Half a roast is worse than a whole one. In the money making lexicon of the ticket speculators, there is no such word as "rather." Its synonym is "failure."

No matter how unbiased you might be, the best you could say for "IDOLS" was that "it wasn't such a bad play," much in the tone that the "good heart" is always conceded to the homely girl. It was pretty well acted, quite nicely staged, fairly novel and not entirely uninteresting. The trouble lay in the fact that its mechanism was wholly theatric and not for a single moment convincing. Oh, no, not that a play has always to be convincing to

get along—I know of so many exceptions—but that “IDOLS” was not even real in the stage sense. Take “The Witching Hour” for instance, a play that did not have to convince its auditors. It convinced its *characters* and thus satisfied the audience that, although the latter might or might not be persuaded to believe in its premises and conclusions, the characters in the play did believe them. As a consequence, it was the stage sense of reality that carried the drama to success.

In “IDOLS,” the characters did not believe themselves, and their lack of belief in themselves soon got across the footlights into the orchestra chairs. I am not agreed that this was all the fault of the actors who essayed the various parts. The lines of the play were false, nay, savored almost of banal amateurishness. The great cult of Mr. Locke’s admirers may regard this as *lèse majesté* if they choose. But before they do so let them hear how the printed words of the book sound when spoken. Yes, the fault is in the lines. The ideas back of most of them are logical enough, yet the verbalism of the ideas succeeds only in robbing them of every vestige of sincerity.

The theme of the play is sufficiently sound; other women have sacrificed their reputations to save men and, even if the latter may not have been their husbands, the plausibility of the theme of the play in question is not wrecked thereby. Of the men performers, Orlando Daly, as the friend of the family, was the most efficient. The women’s roles were interpreted by Cheruit et Cie., Paquin and Heitz-Boyer, of Paris, whose gowns and hats displayed creditable ability in several of the scenes. “Idols,” as far as the clothes went, should have been called “Models.” In the emotional scenes of the play they caused the women in the audience to cry out of sheer envy.

“SEVEN DAYS,” by Mary Roberts Rinehart and Avery Hopwood, produced at the Astor Theater, is one-third of “Three Weeks” in name only. Those who confused it with the latter

before seeing it realized that they had got their dates mixed. It isn’t a tiger skin story; it’s a tiger-sis-boom-ah farce. It is one solid mass play of fun that goes with such a hurrah that it makes you laugh harder than when the opposing quarterback breaks a rib. Three weeks? Why, if the Imperator-skoye and her Paul had had as much excitement as the characters in this play have in just one, that child would have been born with the St. Vitus dance.

According to an announcement, “SEVEN DAYS” is a dramatization of a magazine story of the same name by Miss Rinehart, since included in the text of her recent novel, “When a Man Marries.” Although not announced, the story of “SEVEN DAYS,” as a matter of fact, is not greatly unlike the story that Hough and Adams gave us three years ago in their well named musical show, “The Time, the Place and the Girl.” Those of you who saw the latter will recall that its plot had to do with a group of persons of various caliber who were quarantined for a number of days in a summer hotel, and who had to look out for their own welfare to the extent of scrubbing the floors, cooking the food, and so on. In the Astor Theater farce, a similar group are quarantined in a Riverside Drive house for a week, and are compelled likewise through force of circumstances and not enough bedrooms to work out their own salvation. The present authors, however, have succeeded in doing a thousand times more with the idea than the young Chicagoans, and, aided by Collin Kemper, they have managed to evolve a funnybone tickler that makes dear old “Charley’s Aunt” seem a poor relation in comparison. The cast is splendid. Herbert Corthell, as the head of the house who is forced to be in the kitchen at seven o’clock in the morning, and who remarks, “I haven’t been up this early before since I was up this late”; Allan Pollock, who talks like Frank Worthington and looks like Joe Coyne; Jay Wilson, who is the most realistic policeman that has ever arrested an audience’s

attention; and William Eville, as a pantomimic burglar, could not be better. Miss Florence Reed, who mistakes the burglar for her psychic "control"; Miss Georgia O'Ramey, who pretends to be a wife and a cook although she is neither; and Miss Lucille La Verne, as the aunt who causes most of the trouble, could not be better either. This American made farce has started a commendable campaign for the conservation of our national laughter.

"SEPTIMUS," unlike "Idols," did not show dramatic clay feet, and the dramatization of the infinitely worthier of the two Locke novels was greeted, save in one or two critical instances, with approval. Without the rare *finesse* of George Arliss's acting art, however, it must be admitted that "SEPTIMUS" would have been as simple as it was styled by its author when it first appeared in serial form. Arliss is such a finished artist, such an exquisitely deft player, that he pulls "SEPTIMUS" up by the hair from the quicksands of a doubtful dramatization and makes him so lovable that the audience strokes the dramatically disheveled hair back into place with its applause. It is not the part; it is the actor. It is Arliss, not Septimus they love with their hearts, honor with their applause and obey with their tears. If "Septimus" had never been a book, "SEPTIMUS," the play, would have been more greatly appreciated. But such is the fate of the novel done into stage being. Just as the good attributes of the first wife who is gone are flaunted in the face of the female party of the second matrimonial part who is present, so, in the case in hand, is the moving dramatic picture chided for the absence of some of the more beautiful tones that were in evidence in the novel.

Everybody and his dog has read the book. It would be almost insulting to repeat the story. Suffice it to say that the play is the novel with the character of Zora made zero. The play's love story is the love story of Septimus and Emmy, the latter role very well han-

dled by Miss Emily Stevens, a niece of Mrs. Fiske. Miss Stevens, particularly in the scene where she endeavors to make Septimus understand the truth of her abandonment by the man who has betrayed her, revealed several positively brilliant moments of acting. Some of the reviewers have argued that the adventure of the ruined lady, as Conan Doyle would put it, became decidedly vulgar in its transference from the printed page to the proscenium arch. Although, to be quite sure, such a situation can by no stretch of the imagination or conscience be called refined, it seemed to me that any inherent vulgarity was glossed over by the adroitness of the performers.

"HIS NAME ON THE DOOR," by Frank Lord, formerly a member of the District Attorney's staff of New York, is the dramatization of a soubrette with law on the side. The soubrette is very, very good and the law is very, very bad, and the play is neither entirely one nor the other. When a young playwright sets himself the task of apotheosizing musical comedy *sans grano salis*, however just or firm his ground may be, he must not be disappointed at the doubtful shrug of self-sufficiently wise old Broadway's shoulders; and the shrug came when Mr. Lord gave us a soubrette who was so obsessed with morality that it hurt. Although my knowledge of soubrettes, to a predominant extent, has been gained through the columns of the sporting papers and the aptly placed mirrors in Rector's, I must confess to having participated in the shrugging myself. I am not yet old enough to be so cynical as to believe that the only good soubrette is a dead (or married) one, but I am old enough to be a bit skeptical as to the existence of any so painfully virtuous young advanced chorusette as Mr. Lord's Helen Jarvis. There were too many good-looking young men's photographs on her mantelpiece for me to believe that she was not fooling her dramatic sponsor.

The legal side of the play is without doubt more accurate, for the play-

wright is recognized as an able lawyer and knows what he is talking about even if his audience does not. The story, which, from the legal standpoint, is a bit involved for the layman, concerns the love of Helen for a young lawyer named Brent, the crookedness of the firm of which the latter is a member and his withdrawal from the firm when the girl at last induces him to realize that a name on the door is not the greatest thing in the world after all. Miss Ethel Clayton, a Western stock company actress, played the role of the soubrette heroine prettily and acceptably. With a little more attention to voice shading, it should not be long before she, too, gets her name on Broadway's theatrical door. Byron Douglas, in a bad Wall Street man part much like that of Willard Brockton in "The Easiest Way," and George Gaston, in the role of the best drawn character in the play, a book-keeper, gave intelligent and praiseworthy performances.

The dialogue showed that, whatever Mr. Lord may lack as a creator of faithful characters and effectively congruous dramatic situations, he makes up in his incisive manner of expression. He knows the secret of the value of brevity, and his lines verbalize his ideas with no circumlocutory fold-erol. He rarely hits the nail on his thumb, except when he approaches dramatic petticoats. His men speak like men; his woman character speaks like a self-conscious phonograph. The satyric Wall Street man, who declares himself to be a patron of "the dramatic arts and other sports," and who asserts that "while there may be choir girls in the chorus, you won't find any chorus girls in the choir," tells his direct story, unpleasant though it be. The saintly soubrette, who whines and preaches and wallows in mawkish sentiment, may tell a story, but ears, though they hear, will not believe or give heed. There is, to my mind, only one writer today who knows how to paint true pictures of stage women with his pen, and even that man, Charles Belmont Davis, has never attempted

to visualize his characters back of the very footlights from which he has taken them.

FOUR new musical plays were presented during the month, serving to reintroduce to Broadway Adeline Genée, Frank Daniels, Lew Fields and the Williams half of Williams and Walker. The first appeared amid a constellation of pretty chorus girls grouped under the title of "The Silver Star"; the second in a decidedly dainty and pleasant English done piece called "The Belle of Brittany"; the third in Victor Herbert's "Old Dutch"; and the fourth in an anthracite black and tan vehicle known as "Mr. Lode of Koal."

"THE SILVER STAR," while it probably has not created as much excitement as Halley's comet, is nevertheless thoroughly worth the two dollars that are required for a peep at it through Klaw and Erlanger's New Amsterdam telescope. Harry B. Smith, who wrote the book of the play, at last accounts had not yet received a commission from the New Theater to do a play on the strength of this work of his, but as speculation has been rife in front of the theater, and as there has been a fashionable clothesline at the box office window, he seems perfectly happy to remain "the K-and-E kid." To suggest the plot of the show, it is only necessary to mention such names as these from the cast: Professor Alonzo Dingleblatz, Doctor Algeron Hornblower and Mr. Wiseheimer. George Bickel, who plays the first named character, lives up to the prophecy I made ten years ago when he was appearing in a cheap, obscure burlesque company, that he would prove to be one of the funniest comedians in musical comedy. Miss Emma Janvier, as the spinster who deplores the fact that "Frenchmen aren't as insulting as they used to be," and Miss Nellie McCoy, whose dancing is as good as her clever Yama Yama sister's, are leading helpers in the entertainment. All in all, however, it is Genée who is first, place and the show.

"THE BELLE OF BRITTANY" is one of the best musical plays that ever came out of the test tubes in the English collaboratory. I forget how many tailors it takes to make a man, but it always seems to take at least five people to make an English music show. In this case, if the writers answered the cry of "author, author," it would look like a fire panic. This British product, however, is a gem. Its score is the most tuneful I have heard at Daly's since long before "The School Girl" graduated into matrimony. Its dances, led by Miss Elsa Ryan and Martin Brown, must look hard for rivals. There is, incidentally, an Apache dance in the second act that must make Geronimo turn over in his grave. The general get-up of the production is subtly colorful and pleasing. Frank Daniels, especially in his description of the cruel, inhuman way in which mankind treats the sausage, proves that he does not have to rely any longer on his eyebrows as his most humorous asset. "THE BELLE OF BRITTANY" is the new belle of New York.

In a review of "OLD DUTCH," one critic said that in tiny, six-year-old Miss Helen Hayes, Lew Fields had discovered the greatest leading lady of her size. He is right—as far as he goes. Mistress Helen, you are not only the best leading lady of your size, but you are a whole lot, oh, an awful whole lot better than at least two "leading ladies" three times your size, whose performances my work has compelled me to sit through this season! You don't have as many lines to speak as they had, but those few you have, you articulate clearly and

unaffectedly. And the soulful expression in your little blue eyes, the genuineness of the longing expressed in your dainty white extended arms during the "Dearie" song—why, a hundred schools of expression and acting couldn't teach those great big "leading ladies" anything like it! This mite of femininity, Lew Fields in the role of "a servant girl to a horse," Miss Alice Dovey, a decidedly charming personality, and Victor Herbert's song, "My Gipsy Sweetheart," all go to make "OLD DUTCH" good entertainment.

At the première of "MR. LOBE OF KOAL," the lobby of the Majestic Theater looked like Eighth Avenue on Election Night. The mulatto Four Hundred rubbed elbows with the fast black Fifty-Seven in a true spirit of democracy, for to the metropolitan colored population the advent of Bert Williams was an event of as much dramatic importance and significance as was the opening of the New Theater to their pale-faced brethren. On his first appearance, Mr. Williams received an ovation that would have made a king peevish. It was awe inspiring, wonderful. It created a panic in the restaurant next door and caused the manager of the theater to believe the world had come to an end. You see, it had been so long since they had heard it at the Majestic that they had forgotten what applause sounded like. If you ask me the plot of the play, I shall be embarrassed. I am sure there was one but I couldn't locate it. There was a pretty song, however, called, "The Harbor of Lost Dreams," and, in its way, the affair was not such a bad form of light, dark amusement.



# GEORGE BERNARD SHAW AS A HERO

By H. L. MENCKEN

IF you approach Gilbert K. Chesterton's "GEORGE BERNARD SHAW" (Lane, \$1.50) as serious biography, you will find it amazing in the things it contains and irritating beyond measure in the things it doesn't contain; but if you throttle your yearning for facts and look only for entertainment you will fairly wallow in it. The cleverest man in all the world, with the second cleverest as his subject, is here doing his cleverest writing. The result is a volume as diverting as Nietzsche's "Also Sprach Zarathustra," and as obviously unauthentic. It belongs, not to history, but to philosophic fable. I have shelved it among my more furious epics, cheek by jowl with "The Estimable Life of the Great Gargantua," the Book of Revelation, "Fécondité" and "The Story of Mary MacLane."

The Shaw that Mr. Chesterton draws for us is a valiant and heaven kissing hero, a metaphysical Hugh de Verman-  
dois, a moral Knight Hospitaller, an economic Carrie Nation, an Irish Luther, earnest, lion-hearted and chemically pure. He staggers toward the light of a remote future, the weight of a universe upon his shoulders. It is his business to clear the path, to tear up the brambles, to knock the old gods down, to prick and pulverize the old delusions. He is, in a word, none other than Zarathustra Himself, actually come to life. In every word he utters there is some ghastly stab at pretense, convention, smug content, in his every act, grimace and attribute; in the very raisins of his bill of fare and texture of

his woolen shirt there is some note of impatient revolt. The man is bitter. He thinks deeply and, as Max Beer-bohm once said, indignantly. He is the armed and mobile foe, not alone of sloth and *laissez-faire* but also of peevish dissent and stupid remedy. He hates the reformer almost as much as the unreformable. It is only, indeed, his sublime faith in his own infallibility that saves him from bilious pessimism.

Mr. Chesterton's word picture of this entirely imaginary colossus spreads itself over some two hundred or more delectable pages, and in the course of drawing it he takes occasion to prove that he, too, is a philosophic Sandow. There are, in fact, lengthy passages in which Shaw recedes into the background, losing his character as a hero and taking on the shadowy outlines of a mere text. In these passages Mr. Chesterton maintains anew his familiar theses—that the only real truths in the world are to be found in the Nicene Creed, that science is a snare and human reason a delusion, that Hans Christian Andersen was a greater man than Copernicus, that sentiment is more genuine than hydrochloric acid, that all race progress is an empty appearance. Of his dialectic manner, it is not necessary to give examples, for every habitual reader of books knows it well, and enjoys it hugely without letting it convince him. He is the world's foremost virtuoso of sophistry and paralogy. Not since St. Augustine have the gods sent us a man who could make the incredible so fascinatingly probable.

Getting back to his vegetarian mutations, Mr. Chesterton undertakes to estimate the damage that Shaw has done to the human race and the benefit that he has conferred upon it. In three ways, he says, the author of "Man and Superman" has worked harm. First of all, he has made his followers too fastidious. That is to say, he has inoculated them with a tendency to peck at things and to turn up their noses. The Shawian, when it comes to morality, is too all-fired dainty: he is disgusted by the good old hoggish virtues. In the second place, Shaw has encouraged that anarchy which now torments the world. Seeing his vast success, thousands of lesser sages have sought to win fame by denouncing the true, the good and the beautiful, and the result has been a needless slaughter of ideals. In the third and last place, he has been too much the joker. Mankind, as a species, has no sense of humor whatever, and so Shaw's elaborate hoaxes and wheezes have been taken seriously, and headaches have been the fruit of them.

On the credit side, Mr. Chesterton finds three high and honorable services. Number one is the service of making philosophy intelligible and popular; number two is that of stirring up the philosophical animals, and number three is that of obliterating the mere cynic, with his ineffective sneers. Without entering into a long consideration of Mr. Chesterton's exposition and demonstration of these ideas, I may be permitted to record, perhaps, my modest conviction that only the second of his trio of services has any real existence. Shaw has not stamped out cynicism, and he has not made philosophy popular. The palpable survival of eminent cynics proves the first proposition, and the second finds its proof in two obvious facts, the first being that Shaw is not a philosopher, and the second being that philosophy remains today, as it was in Carthage and Mesopotamia, entirely beyond the ken of the plain people.

So far as I have been able to discover, the central problem of philosophy—What is truth?—has never even occurred to Shaw. Search his writings from first

to last and you will find no answer to it and no attempt at an answer. At one moment he seems to subscribe to a sort of rationalism, and at the next moment he is a thoroughgoing empiricist. He flirts with mysticism, agnosticism, sensationalism; he is, in turn, Kantian, Nietzschean, Haeckelian. When he talks of one thing he is a violent dogmatist; when he talks of something else he is a pallid skeptic. Taking him by and large, he is probably a sort of pragmatist—which means, not a philosopher at all, but a man from whom all the philosophical juices have been squeezed.

But when he credits Shaw with a beneficent stirring up of the animals I agree with Mr. Chesterton affably and completely. Shaw's method is that of the Suffragettes. He heaves bricks, horsewhips demigods, howls from cart-tails and has himself arrested. He has a great contempt for the respectable, an abysmal loathing of the usual. And he has the wit and humor, the command of epithet and skill at fence, to make his onslaughts dangerous. Such a man, I believe, does a lot of good in the world. His light thrusts go home; he sheds blood where blood letting is needed; he is a resourceful and horrific foeman to platitude, conscious virtue, orthodoxy, tradition, superstition and all the other vile impediments to human progress. He is honest enough to laugh now and then at himself; he can find the heart to turn his squirt gun upon his own creed. He is riotously human and sentimental, and yet he can lift himself above emotion and look at men and things with a clear eye. Such men are rare. Ibsen was one, as "The Wild Duck" proves. Shaw is another. You will not find many more.

We have forgotten long since that Francis Bacon was a thief, and we have begun to forget that William Wycherley was a white slave; and so it is not unreasonable to suppose that we shall forget, too, some day that Oscar Wilde was careless of the decencies. The process of forgetting, it is even probable, is already in progress, for didn't the first



citizens of London not long ago give a public dinner to Robert Ross for his fidelity to Wilde as friend and protector? Once that process is complete, the residuum will be a great reputation, for while it may be admitted freely that Wilde was not a genius of the first rank, the fact that he stood very near the top of the second rank cannot be denied. He restored wit to the English drama, whence it had departed with Sheridan's youth; he made sound and permanent contributions to English criticism; and he left behind him more than one example of inspired English verse.

A new and complete edition of his works, edited by Mr. Ross, is now under way, and as a sort of herald the volume containing his poems is sent out ahead—"THE POEMS OF OSCAR WILDE," Complete and Authorized (*Luce*, \$1.50). There is no need to consider them in detail. Not a few of them—"Ave Imperatrix," "The Ballad of Reading Gaol" and "Easter Day," for example—are already firmly lodged in the anthologies. They are striking and beautiful poems, with music in them and the great human note. Elsewhere the familiar faults of Wilde—his posing, his strutting, his tinsel—mar his fine stanzas, but in the worst that he wrote there is proof that he is not to be punished, dead, by oblivion for the crimes that he paid for, living, in intolerable suffering.

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE's book of "NEW POEMS" (*Lane*, \$1.50) is a collection of all sorts, ranging from verses of almost startling beauty to clumsy pieces of occasion. To the first category belong the Kiplingesque "Cry of the Little Peoples," the delicious "Red Rose of Margaret" and the noble "Sleep for London." In this last poem, perhaps, Mr. Le Gallienne best vindicates his title to the name of poet. It is an excursion into a field much trodden of late—an effort to put into words the vast poetry of a great city. No other poet that I know has succeeded here so splendidly. But one line, as it were, of that colossal epic is given to us in this short piece, but one line, if it is perfect, is certainly worth having. In the book

as a whole, the good things far outnumber the bad.

MR. LE GALLIENNE also makes his appearance this month as a translator, with a version of Richard Wagner's "TRISTAN UND ISOLDE." He essays that ancient staff rhyme or alliterative verse which Wagner used, and surmounts its difficulties with superabundant ease. The result is a Wagner libretto in English so far above the ordinary translations that it stands in a class alone. It is printed in a large folio, with historical and critical chapters by Edward Ziegler and a number of fine pictures in color by G. A. Williams (*Stokes*, \$6.00). Mr. Ziegler is a thoroughly competent man; his estimate of Wagner is a just one, and his discussion of the "Tristan und Isolde" music is clear and penetrating. Altogether, the volume may well serve as an example of the gift book at its best.

ANOTHER poet—John G. Neihardt. I don't know who John G. Neihardt may be—what a label for a rhapsodist!—but this I do know, that he writes blank verse of quite remarkable excellence. You will find a lot of it in his book, "MAN SONG" (*Kennerley*, \$1.00). It has clang and clash in it and gorgeous color. The rare hand for devising arresting phrases and epithets which distinguishes Stephen Phillips at his best is Mr. Neihardt's, too; and now and then his verses roll out as sonorously as "Marlowe's mighty line." His efforts at rhyme are less successful. He is, in fact, a lame rhymster; but in writing blank verse, that noble English measure which, so poor John Davidson used to say, thrills its maker like wine from the gods, he is a craftsman of unquestioned skill.

MORE poets yet! Of Lizette Woodworth Reese's delightful volume, "A WAYSIDE LUTE" (*Mosher*, \$1.50), I hope to write at length in some future article. Of William Watson's "NEW POEMS" (*Lane*, \$1.50) it is sufficient to say that they are workmanlike and harmless. Save in one of them, a "Song

From an Unpublished Drama," which is anything but new, I see little else. There is no thrill in them; they miss greatness by a million miles. The commonplace stanzas of Denis A. McCarthy in "A ROUND OF RIMES" (*Little-Brown*, \$1.00) are even less worth praising. They are of obvious sentiment, of trite optimism all compact. Now and then a singing line stands out, but in the main they are newspaper verses. With James D. Dingwell's "CHRISTUS CENTURIARUM" (*Badger*, \$1.00) we strike bottom. These are the safe and sane strophes that undergraduates write at Oxford. They are to be tested, not by the standards of poetry, but by those of theology.

HENRY JAMES, it would appear, is clearing his shelves of shopworn stock and remnants of odd lengths—a sensible and even laudable enterprise. One of the latter appears on the current book list under the appellation of "JULIA BRIDE" (*Harper's*, \$1.25) and in a gorgeous red cover. It seems to be made up of the first and second chapters of a novel begun in high spirits and terminated in sudden despair. That novel, I am convinced, had Mr. James but labored resolutely to the end of it, would have gone thundering down the dim corridors of time as one of the most delightful to his credit, for the two chapters he now gives to the world are in his very best manner. In spirit and humor, in indirection and ambuscade, in ingenuity and insight, and even in actual theme, they recall "What Maisie Knew."

The Maisie of this limbless trunk of a story is a young woman of vast charm, whose social progress is hampered by a somewhat disconcerting history. Her mamma, also a lady of charm, is a triple divorcee, and she herself has been engaged no less than half a dozen times. These facts confront her gloomily when a young man of rich but extremely respectable parentage begins to take notice of her. How is she to gloss over and minimize her ghastly past? She begins by tackling her mamma's second husband. Will he be a dear, and suffer the

story to be circulated that mamma simply had to leave him, he being an insufferable brute? Gladly, he says—but the fact of the matter is that he thinks of marrying again himself, and the highly virtuous object of his devotion is to be won only upon the theory that mamma was the brute. Julia, staggered, turns to one of her six young men. Will he assure the opulent but moral eligible that there was never any engagement, and so inoculate him with the idea that the five others were also mere gossip? He consents to undertake the office, not only willingly, but even wildly. He will visit the opulent eligible at once, and take his fiancée with him, for there is a successor to Julia in his affections. And then poor Julia begins to doubt the expediency of the whole maneuver. This ex-lover, indeed, is plainly inflamed by the idea of making social capital out of the encounter with the young millionaire.

Here the story ends, with Julia weeping mournfully. It's a pity that Mr. James lost heart. What a novel the history of Julia's battle against the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, with victory at the end, would have made!

By a curious chance, two books of stories by Rudyard Kipling come together—one made up of his latest work, and the other of tales written in his prehistoric nonage and rescued lately from the dusty files of Indian newspapers. The former bears the title, "ACTIONS AND REACTIONS" (*Doubleday-Page*, \$1.50). There are eight stories in it, and most of them are stories of the very first rank. Let no sour croaker convince you that Kipling is going backward. Believe it not, dear friends. Ideas without number still throng his mind, and he has a technique that few rivals even remotely approach. If you doubt it, read "An Habitation Enforced" and "With the Night Mail," in this varied and interesting collection. The man able to write such fiction is a man still far from the autumn of his year.

The other book is called "ABAPT THE

FUNNEL (*Dodge*, \$1.50), and in it we behold the youthful Kipling of the days when the "Plain Tales From the Hills" were on the stocks. The value of these stories, it must be confessed, is archeological rather than artistic, but that archeological value is immense. Here we have the author's first sketches of the characters which won him fame, and his first essays in that cocksure, galloping style which won him copious imitation. The immortal Mulvaney appears as Gunner Barnabas, of the Mountain Battery, and there are shaky, uncertain attempts at Mrs. Hauksbee, Ortheris, Learoyd and the others. A book to make the Kipling lover glow! A marvelous boy it was, indeed, who sweated over blank copy paper on those hellish Indian nights, in the year of grace 1888!

UNLESS we assume it to be the theory of the publishing gentlemen that the name of F. Hopkinson Smith covereth a multitude of sins, how in the world are we to account for that versatile and ingenious author's latest book, "FORTY MINUTES LATE" (*Scribner's*, \$1.50)? As a book, pure and simple, it has all of the shortcomings and few of the merits of Webster's Unabridged Dictionary. Toiling through the first chapter, one discovers it to be a much padded and exceedingly tedious anecdote, with little excuse or interest. In the second chapter one encounters an echo of "The Wood Fire in No. 3," and then, later on, a store of other things, from a genuine short story to a rhapsody in praise of L. Aston Knight, the artist, and at the end, twenty-two pages of rambling recollections of travel. There is ground for the fear that Mr. Smith is taking seriously the Boston *Herald's* remarkable judgment that he is "the Thackeray of American fiction," for an external likeness to the "Roundabout Papers" appears in some of these sketches. But that is as far as the resemblance goes. Thackeray was a colossus, and the marks of his great genius were upon the slightest of his productions. His report of a cab accident, a performance of "Camille," a walk up Broadway from Xtieth Street to Xty-fifth, even of a

sermon, would have been literature. In Mr. Smith, for all his facility, there is no such overpowering charm of manner. When he has an interesting story to tell he tells it charmingly, but when he is merely making conversation the interest of the reader is apt to lag. —

"LITTLE SISTER SNOW," by Frances Little (*Century Co.*, \$1.00), is a Japanese story of the wishy-washy, conventional sort. A dashing young American invades the land of Nippon, wins the heart of a little Nipponese maiden—and then sails away to wed his best girl in the States. Is it really impossible to write a Japanese story without using again that ancient and tedious plot? Is the vain yearning of a Mongolian damsel for a Caucasian husband the only dramatic situation known in modern Japan? Common sense answers nay, but the tourist *literati*, particularly of the sentimental sex, seem to say yea. Mrs. Little's story, even forgetting its triteness, is a very ordinary performance.

"BELLA DONNA," by Robert Hichens (*Lippincott*, \$1.50), is an appalling tome of over five hundred closely printed pages, in which the author essays to lay bare the soul of a thoroughly bad woman. The thing is done in his best pictorial manner, with the yellow sands and blue sky of Egypt as a background. The title is not inept, for an odor of "poppy and mandragora and all the drowsy syrups of the East" hangs over the tale. As a serious psychological study it has about as much value as a drama by Charles Klein, but as a device for killing time agreeably and by wholesale it is worth very respectful consideration.

ANOTHER fat and chromatic book with a drug store touch to it is "TRESPASS," by Mrs. Henry Dudeney (*Small-Maynard*, \$1.50). The fable here is the startlingly novel one of a woman wooed by two men, the one a bold Don Juan and the other a servile slave. Engaged to the slave, the woman makes off with the Don Juan, who, when he tires of

her, sends her back to the slave, who promptly marries her. Then the Don Juan undertakes to borrow her, and there ensues an incredible encounter, from which the slave emerges sincerely sorry for the balked Don Juan. A book full of gaudy adjectives and boudoir philosophy; a book in the English "lady novelist" style.

THE two extremes of that melancholy science, Shakespearean criticism, are mirrored in a pair of books now before us, the one being "THE MAN SHAKESPEARE AND HIS TRAGIC LIFE STORY," by Frank Harris (*Kennerley*, \$2.50), and the other being "THE SHAKESPEAREAN STAGE," by Victor E. Albright (*Columbia University Press*, \$1.50). Mr. Harris's method of attack is fanciful, daring, imaginative, cabalistic, almost fantastic, while Dr. Albright's is that of the slow moving, heavy stepping, sure-footed German professor-doctor. The one seeks to uncover the soul of Shakespeare in his plays; the other's intent is merely to recreate for us, out of a vast heap of stray hints and scattered vestiges, the Shakespearean stage. In each case the result is a book of interest to all whose thoughts turn proudly to the glories of our incomparable English literature. As for me, I prefer Dr. Albright's admirable inquiry to Mr. Harris's gorgeous theory, just as I prefer vaccination to the Emmanuel Movement, and a square meal to the doctrine of infant damnation; but in all such matters, I freely confess, prejudice plays a part, and so I lay down no bitter comparisons.

Mr. Harris starts out with the assumption that a dramatic author, no matter how hard he may strive to be remote and impersonal, must inevitably put a good deal of himself into his characters. Granted. But his gallery of characters, if he writes many plays, must be large and diverse, with pessimists and optimists, idealists and materialists, ascetics and epicureans hopelessly thrown together. How are we, then, to determine which individual or group actually reflects the author's own philosophy? Mr. Harris answers with

another assumption, to wit, that in Shakespeare's case, the man himself is to be found best drawn in Hamlet. After that his task is easy, for all he has to do is to prove that there is some flavor of Hamlet in every other Shakespearean hero—an enterprise whose simplicity becomes evident if William Jennings Bryan or Count Tolstoi or Harry Thaw or any other man of parts be substituted for Hamlet. There is, indeed, a dash of each and all of us in Romeo, Macbeth, Jacques and Duke Vincentio, for these personages are great creations, with the universal human markings strong upon them.

But admitting Mr. Harris's pair of assumptions, we behold a Shakespeare much like the one denounced for vain resignationism by George Bernard Shaw, a morbidly introspective and somewhat cynical person, with doubts of everything, including even his own doubts. He begins as a voluptuous youth, whose rapid burning of the candle leads to satiety and boredom; he proceeds by easy stages to genial agnosticism, and he ends with a pretty firm conviction that all convictions are inferior to agreeable emotions. A plausible picture, it must be admitted, but still not one that bears the stamp of satisfying verity. We might, indeed, start out with an assumption exactly contrary to Mr. Harris's second one, *i. e.*, that Shakespeare, when he drew Hamlet, was trying to draw the man least like himself, and develop a colorable theory from it. But let Mr. Harris have his way. He has made an entertaining book, and if only for its chapters upon the poet's alleged passion for Mary Fitton, maid of honor to Queen Bess, it is worth standing on the bookshelf.

Dr. Albright, as I have said, is not a poet, but a statistician. He attempts to show us the theater for which Shakespeare's plays were written, its stage, its crude scenery, its customs, its conventions. He ransacks the whole literature of the subject; he quotes stage directions from hundreds of plays; he considers the views of all possible authorities. In the end he sums up in a clear and convincing manner. "This mono-

graph," says a note opposite the preface, "has been approved by the Department of English in Columbia University as a contribution to knowledge worthy of publication." It is.

Now come two attempts to interpret the spirit of a town, both full of insight and understanding, poetry and color, sympathy and affection. The one is Jacob A. Riis's "THE OLD TOWN" (*Macmillan*, \$2.00), and the other is James Douglas's "ADVENTURES IN LONDON" (*Cassell*, \$1.75). It is the drab little fishing village of Ribe, in Denmark, wherein he first saw the light, that Mr. Riis tries to draw for us in his book, a village of queer old gabled houses, ancient traditions and bitter winds from the sea. The gaunt Domkirke, as austere as the creed it glorifies, has looked down on the roofs for many years, but the old romance of Odin's day is not yet quite dead. Storks still build their nests in the eaves, and the Leprecawn, or Little People, still come down the wide chimneys at nights to scare bad boys and reward good ones. Traversing Ribe's cobbled streets, with Mr. Riis as guide, one gets a better understanding of Hans Christian Andersen. It is, in truth, a fairy tale town, and in this discursive and delightful book there is something of a fairy tale's charm.

Mr. Douglas's volume is a collection of impressionistic sketches, perhaps eighty of them, and in them he tries to interpret the city in terms of its people, and its people in terms of their heroes. These heroes, it is apparent, are not only the gorgeous folk of parliament house and palace, but also the passing Hamlets, Dogberrys, Romeos and Juliets of each day's drama—the magnificent arch jehu on the box of the Lord Mayor's coach, Dorando the runner of marathons, the new conductor at Covent Garden, Seymour Hicks, Mrs. Pankhurst, Jem Mace, the chief judge at the Old Bailey, trying a capital case with a nosegay of roses, carnations and sweet peas in his hand. Mr. Douglas gets beyond bricks and mortar; he makes real for us, not London, but the

Londoners. I know of no other man who has got more life into the picture, not even George W. Stevens.

A BOOK of picturesque charm is "A LADY OF THE OLD RÉGIME," by Ernest F. Henderson (*Macmillan*, \$2.00). It tells the story of Elizabeth Charlotte, daughter of the Elector Charles Louis of the Palatinate and wife of Louis XIV's brother. For forty years she was a principal figure in the high comedy enacted at Versailles—witty, caustic, a great intriguer and politician and full of feminine guile. To one and all she was simply "Madame." No further appellation was needed to identify so assertive a personality. Dr. Henderson's method is much like that of Thackeray in "The Four Georges." That is to say, he takes the drama of history for granted, and devotes his chief attention to the actors. The result is a strikingly vivid and realistic picture of French Court life at the dawn of the eighteenth century.

A USEFUL life work is that of George P. Upton, who seems ambitious to leave behind him a series of books describing all the music worth hearing. He has already given us volumes upon the standard operas, symphonies and oratorios, and now, after a rest of several years, he comes forward with one telling all that the music lover wants to know about the tried and true overtures, suites and tone poems. He calls it "THE STANDARD CONCERT REPERTORY" (*McClurg*, \$1.75), and like its predecessors, it has many merits. Mr. Upton's explanations are not the long-winded dissertations one finds between the advertisements in concert programs. On the contrary, he boils down his facts without mercy, but for all that, he rejects nothing that is of real interest or importance. In his book you will find clear accounts of the origin, history and artistic significance of all the pieces that orchestras commonly play, from the four Leonora overtures and Weber's "Invitation to the Dance," to Tchaikowsky's "Nut Cracker" suite and Debussy's "Afternoon of a Fawn."

A "uniform edition" very unlike those commonly peddled by pesky book agents is that of Anatole France's stories and sketches (*Lane*, \$2.00 *per volume*). There are twenty-five volumes in all, printed in beautiful type upon good paper and bound in dignified red cloth covers. The translations, by various hands, are all carefully edited by Frederic Chapman. As for France, he needs no testimonial from humble critics.

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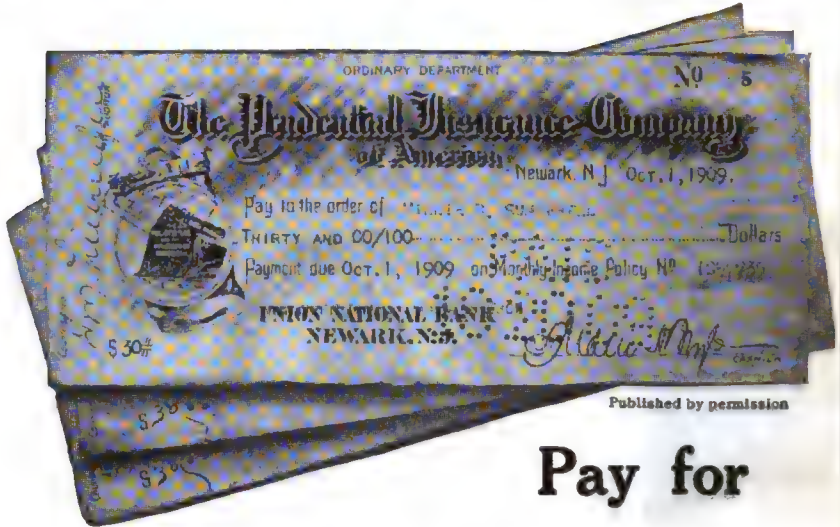
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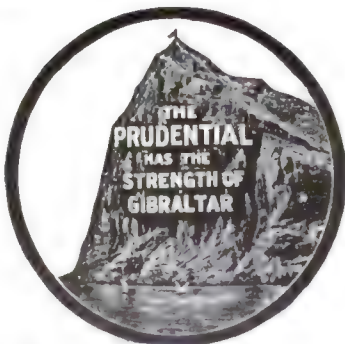
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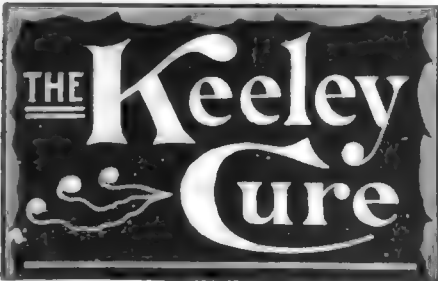
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